3
Bound Beauty
MICK TAKEUCHI

THE SOUL go!comi OF MANGA

Round Beauty

Chiyako and her companions are summoned to see the infamous "Head of the Family" – someone whose hatred for Chiyako's precious sensei runs so deep that what starts as a routine visit quickly turns into something far more dangerous...

FROM THE CREATOR OF

HER MAJESTY'S DOG

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RATED T TEEN 13+

Bound Beauty

3

Eighth Binding
縛りの捌

STAFF ONLY
YOOOOWCH!!
STAFF ONLY
HEY... YOU OKAY?
I'M...
...P... PER...
HUFF
HUFF
PER-FECTLY FINE...
LIMP
Though it is amusing
THAT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE "PERFECTLY FINE".

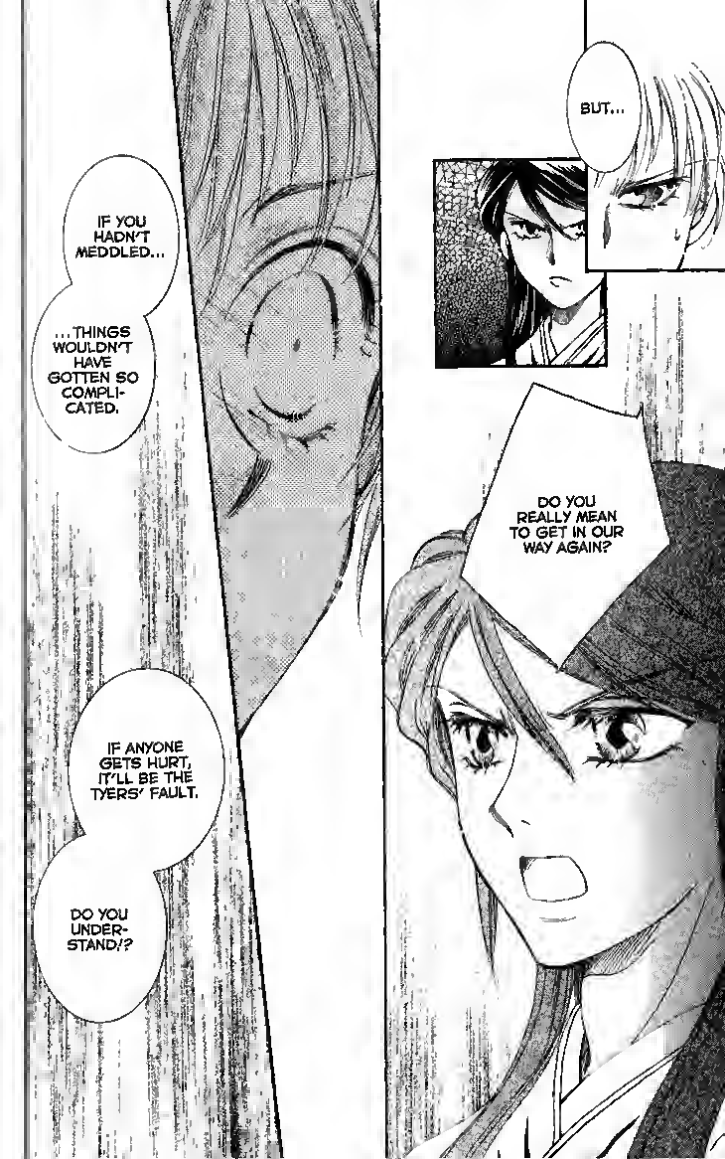
THERE WAS A GHOST RUNNING AMOK AT THE NEW
SHE TURNED OUT TO BE WAKANA-CHAN, THE DAUGHTER OF A SERIAL KILLER.
I TRIED TO SAVE HER, BUT...
...HER FEAR OVER-WHELMED ME AND...
...I LOST CONTROL OF SHIROGANE.
IT RUSHED INTO MY BODY.
THROB
NOW IT FEELS LIKE...
...SHIRO-GANE'S EATING ME FROM THE INSIDE.
Ugh...
YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW!
!

IF THE SPIRIT IS STRONG ENOUGH, AND YOU LOSE CONTROL ...
...ITS POWER CAN TRIPLE, AND COME RIGHT BACK AT THE SPINNER.
THE FIVE COLORED THREADS ALSO ACT AS SPIRITUAL AMPLIFIERS.
LOSING FOCUS IN THE MIDST OF TYING...
...IS AS FOOLISH AS TURNING A KNIFE ON YOURSELF!
HUH?
BUT THE FACT THAT CHIKO'S BODY HASN'T REVERTED ...
... MEANS THAT SHE'S STILL ACTIVATING IT, RIGHT?
COULDN'T WE JUST PUT IT BACK?
...
HOW?
THAT DOES IT!
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO RECONCILE HER COLORED THREAD!?

SPREADING FIRE
Don't blame me.
Uhhh
WHAT WERE YOU THINKING ...
...NOT EVEN TEACHING HER HOW TO SHEATH HER POWER!?
PART OF A TYER'S TRAINING...
... DOESN'T FOCUS ON FORCE, BUT ON...
...QUELLING THE THREAD TO PROTECT ONE'S SELF FROM AN ENEMY.
THROB
THROB
IT'S NOT LIKE I SET OUT TO MASTER THIS!
I GOT BOUND TO SHIROGANE BY PURE CHANCE.
I WAS DOING THE BEST I COULD WITH IT...
SNAP
IT'S THAT WISHY-WASHY ATTITUDE...
...THAT MAKES YOU SUCH A CHILD!
WHAT!?

ENOUGH!
THIS IS NO TIME TO ARGUE.
.....
TAKE TSUNA/ CHIYAKO BACK WITH YOU.
HUH!?
WHY ME!?
HE'S RIGHT.
WE HAVE TO SETTLE THINGS WITH THAT EVIL SPIRIT.
AKEO-SAN'S SHOWER OF FIRE ... SHOULD HAVE WEAKENED HER.
UNLESS IT JUST MADE HER ANGRIER.

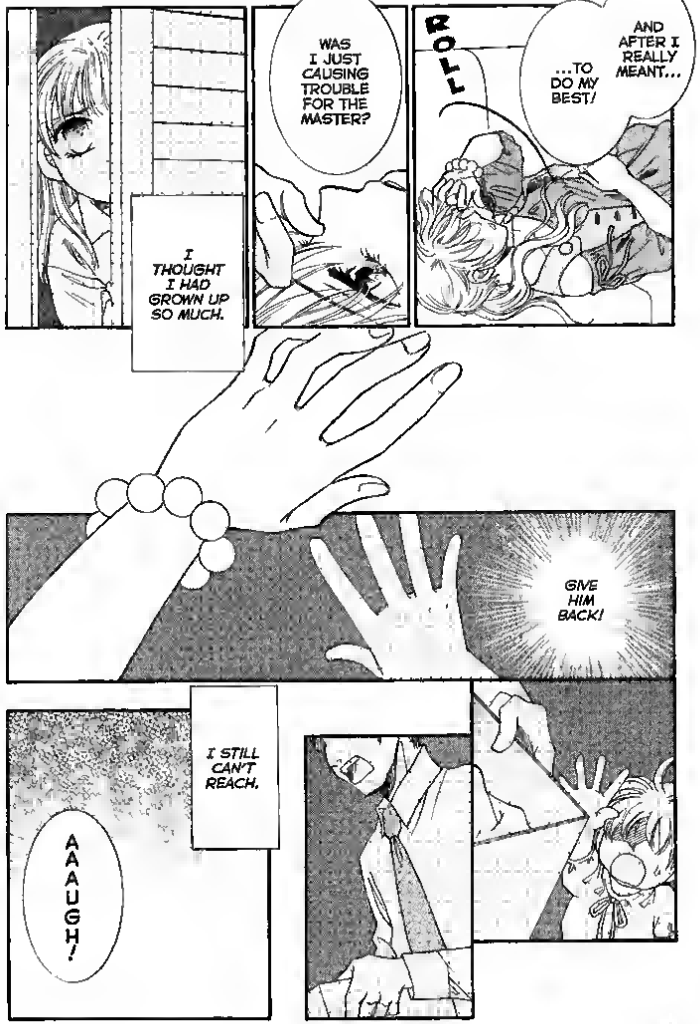
THAT LITTLE GIRL...
WAKANA-CHAN ISN'T AN EVIL SPIRIT.
SHE DIDN'T MEAN TO KILL HER DAD...
...EVEN IF HE WAS THE KILLER.
SHE WAS JUST SCARED.
I HATE BEING SCARED. I'LL MAKE IT ALL GO AWAY.
SHE JUST WANTED THINGS TO CHANGE.
!
THAT MAKES HER AN EVIL SPIRIT!
NORMALLY, TO EXORCISE A SPIRIT...
...IT'S BEST TO SEVER ITS LINGERING TIES.
BUT THAT GIRL IS NOT TIED TO THIS WORLD.
HOW CAN SHE BE, WHEN SHE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW SHE'S DEAD?
UNABLE TO EMBRACE HER TRUE STATE...
...SHE SURVIVES ON MADNESS AND FEAR.
THERE'S NO POINT IN TALKING TO HER.


BUT...
DO YOU REALLY MEAN TO GET IN OUR WAY AGAIN?
IF YOU HADN'T MEDDLED...
...THINGS WOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN SO COMPLI-CATED.
IF ANYONE GETS HURT, IT'LL BE THE TYERS' FAULT.
DO YOU UNDER-STAND!?

Right there.
She blew her lid.
Eep.
AH...
RUSTLE
I TAKE RESPONSIBILITY.
MASTER!!
I KNEW IT WAS DANGEROUS TO LEAVE IT TO A NOVICE...
...BUT I STILL LET CHIYAKO TAKE ON SHIROGANE.
I TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY.

I CAN'T LET THE MASTER TAKE ALL THE BLAME!
W...WAIT!
YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG, MASTER! I'M THE ONE WHO–
CLATTER
DON'T WORRY. I'LL STAY PUT HERE.
THROB
I'LL...
FINE.
...BE GOOD.

EVERY-ONE...
GOOD LUCK WITH THE CASE.
.....
SHUT
POOMF
AM I REALLY...
...JUST GETTING IN THE WAY?

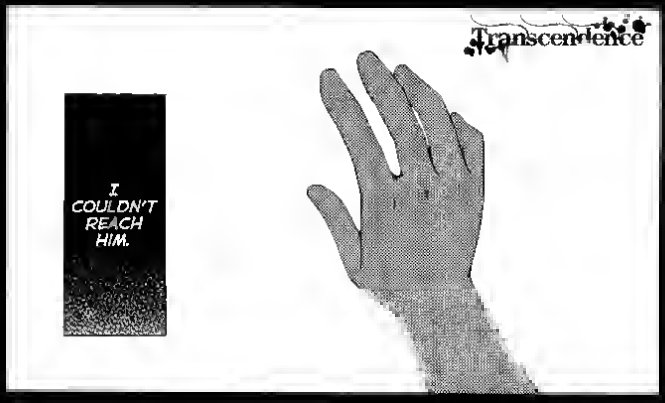

I THOUGHT I HAD GROWN UP SO MUCH.
WAS I JUST CAUSING TROUBLE FOR THE MASTER?
ROLL
...TO DO MY BEST!
AND AFTER I REALLY MEANT...
GIVE HIM BACK!
I STILL CAN'T REACH.
AAAUGH!

I WISH...
...I WAS AN ADULT!
I WANTED TO GROW UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
IF I WAS BIGGER I COULD'VE PROTECTED MY MOM.
FROM MY DAD'S HAND.
FROM ALL THE MEAN STUFF OUTSIDE.

BUT ONE RAINY DAY...
...MY MOM LEFT.
MY DAD TOLD ME THAT..
...SHE LEFT US FOR A MAN.
HE TOLD ME I'D BEEN...
...
THROWN AWAY.
I THOUGHT IT WAS BECAUSE I COULDN'T HELP HER.
SHE FOUND SOMEDNE WHO COULD.

SHE DIDN'T NEED ME BECAUSE I WAS JUST A KID.
THAT'S HOW I FELT.
THAT'S WHY...
...I WAS SO HAPPY WHEN I FOUND FLUFFY.
FLUFFY WAS SMALL AND HELPLESS.
IF I DIDN'T TAKE CARE OF HIM, HE'D DIE
FLUFFY NEEDED ME.
I FINALLY FELT IMPORTANT TO SOMEONE.

YOU'RE JUST A HELPLESS BABY!
YOU THINK YOU CAN RAISE A PUPPY!?
SLAP
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU BROUGHT A MANGY MUTT INTO MY HOUSE.
GIVE HIM BACK!
FLUFFY NEEDS ME!
GIVE HIM BACK!
GIVE HIM BACK!!
I'LL HAVE THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES DEAL WITH HIM.



I REALIZED HOW POWERLESS I WAS.

THAT'S WHY I COULDN'T PROTECT FLUFFY.

MY HANDS WERE TOO WEAK.

I WAS TOO SMALL.

...MY SOUL WAS CRUSHED OVER AND OVER AGAIN.
EVEN THOUGH I KEPT THAT BOY IN MIND AND TRIED MY BEST...
DON'T GIVE UP.
WITHOUT STRENGTH, I COULDN PROTECT ANYTHING
NOBODY NEEDED

SSSSHHH
AND THEN ONE DAY...
UGH, YOU'RE KIDDING ME!!
IT'S POURING AND I FORGOT MY UMBRELLA!
POP
GUESS I'LL CALL SOMEONE FOR A RIDE.
I've got no other choice.
16:37
EVEN THOUGH I HAD A WHILE BEFORE CURFEW...
...I DIDN'T WANT TO GO HOME.

SPLISH
IS SOME-BODY THERE?
OH!
THAT MUST BE WHOEVER LIVES HERE!
SORRY, I WAS JUST TRYING TO GET OUT OF THE...
... RAIN ...
...I MET THE MASTER.

THE BOY WITH THE READ THREAD ...
...WHO SAVED ME FROM THE FIRE!
DASH
FLASH
IT'S HIM!
LUNGE
I MISSED YOUUUUU!!
SLIP

...I WAS SUCH AN IDIOT.
LOOKING BACK ON IT...
ばしゃあ
SPLASH
BOW
BOW
I'M REEEALLY SORRY!
I GOT YOU DRIPPING WET.
AND I IMPOSED ON YOU BECAUSE OF THE RAIN...
Thanks for the towel!

I DOUBTED MY KIDS WOULD SHOW UP IN THIS RAIN...
...BUT I JUST COULDN'T CLOSE THE GATES.
SWF
KIDS?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
H...I to get changed.
Oh!
THIS IS...
...A CALLI-GRAPHY STUDIO?
I JUST WATCH THE CHILDREN PRACTICE.
IT'S NOT A STRICT CURRICULUM.
あおやぎ
うみ

I've never seen anyone use black terracotta before.
Oooh...
SWF
.....
UH...
WHY DO I HAVE TO PRACTICE?
And you've never done it before, right?
IT'LL HELP PASS THE TIME.
SO...
WHAT SHOULD I WRITE, MASTER?
HUH?
ANYTHING.

I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO CHOOSE FOR MYSELF.
WHATEVER I LIKE, HUH?
Maybe my motto?
Or a favorite phrase?
Whaaaat?
YOU MEAN THERE'S NO GUIDE-LINES?
WRITE WHAT-EVER YOU LIKE.
MY DAD DECIDED EVERY-THING...
OR MY HOME OR EVEN MY CLOTHES!
NOT WHAT I ATE OR DRANK.
I NEVER HAD THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE.
ESPE-CIALLY NOT AFTER MY MOM LEFT.
雨だもの。
*It's raining, it's pouring.

WORDS ARE A WINDOW TO THE HEART.
THEY'RE SAID TO REFLECT WHAT'S IN THE WRITER'S SOUL.
ESPECIALLY WHEN WRITTEN IN CALLIGRAPHY.
DO YOU HATE...
...THE RAIN?
He got it!?
HUH!?
Is this a Mitsuo Aida tribute?*

*See Translator's Notes

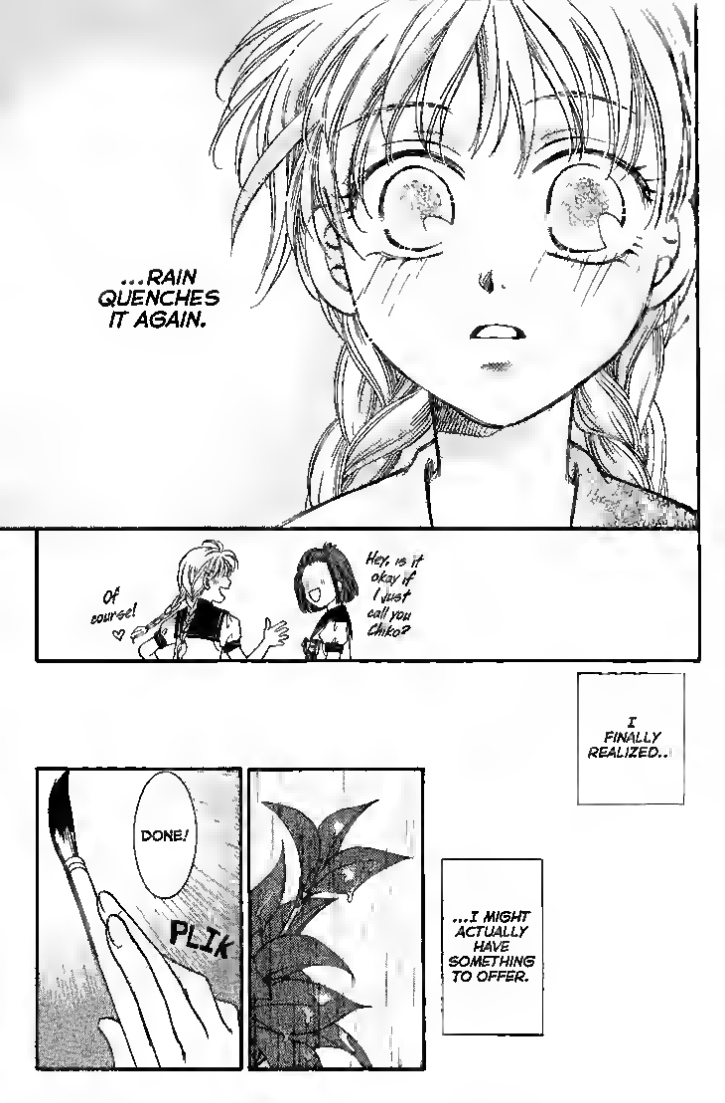
SOMEONE ONCE SAID...
...RAIN SHOWERS THE SPIRIT, AND WATERS THE SOUL.
HIS WRITING...
...IS WAY GENTLER THAN I EXPECTED.
It grows?
Like my spirit's a plant?
What?
LIFT
WOW!

夏雨ト
SEE? SUMMER RAIN...
...SHOWERS THE SPIRIT.
AND WATERS THE SOUL.
FOR SUCH A BIG...
...AND MASCULINE HAND...
...THE CHARACTERS SPILL FROM HIS BRUSH SO SERENELY.
OH, TO BE BIG...

JUST AS RAIN ON A HOT SUMMER DAY BRINGS A COOL BREEZE...
...IT CAN HEAL A PERSON'S WOUNDED HEART.
IT QUENCHES THE DRY, CRACKED EARTH.
EVEN IF YOU DON'T NEED IT...
...THERE'S ALWAYS SOMEONE WHO DOES.
IT CAN HEAL...
...A PERSON'S WOUNDED HEART.
EVERYTHING IN THIS WORLD IS NECESSARY.

I THOUGHT IT WAS...
...JUST THE USUAL PRETENTIOUS STUFF ADULTS LOVE TO SPOUT.
AFTER ALL...
...I WAS NOT A NECESSARY T. ALL.
GOTO-SAN, THANK YOU!
HUH?
COME ON!
YOU TOLD MY FORTUNE, REMEMBER?

N... NO WAY, I JUST...
IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU, GOTO-SAN!
AND HE SAID HE LIKED ME TOO!
...I GOT BRAVE AND ASKED MY CRUSH OUT!
WELL, SINCE YOU SAID IT'D WORK OUT...
THANK YOU SO MUCH!
WHEN THE EARTH IS DRY AND CRACKED...
...WANT YOU TO TELL THEIR FORTUNES!
SOME OTHER GIRLS...
I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD HELP ANYBODY.
...IT JUST MADE ME SICK.
EVEN THOUGH I COULD ALWAYS SEE THE RED THREAD OF DESTINY...


...RAIN QUENCHES IT AGAIN.
Hey, is it okay if I just call you Chiko?
Of course! ♡
I FINALLY REALIZED..
DONE!
PLIK
...I MIGHT ACTUALLY HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER.

I WANTED...

...TO BE LIKE THE RAIN.

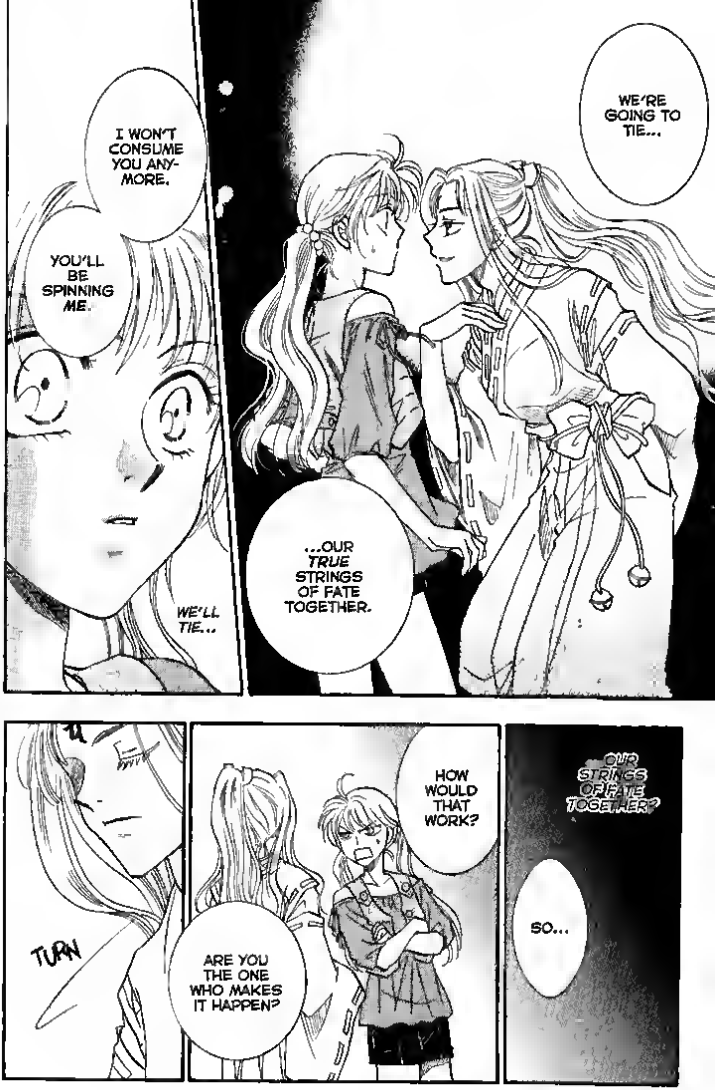
OH!

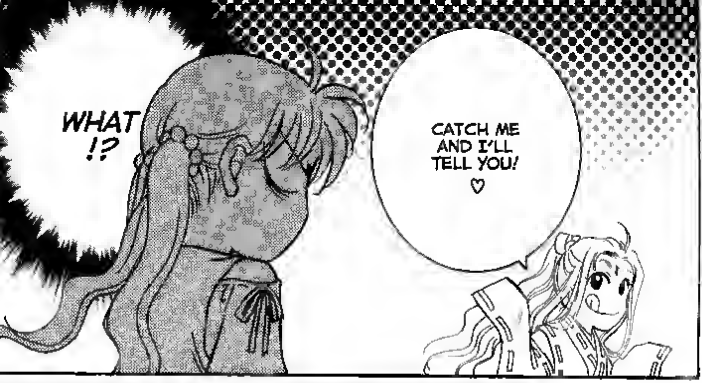
MAYBE THAT'S WHY...

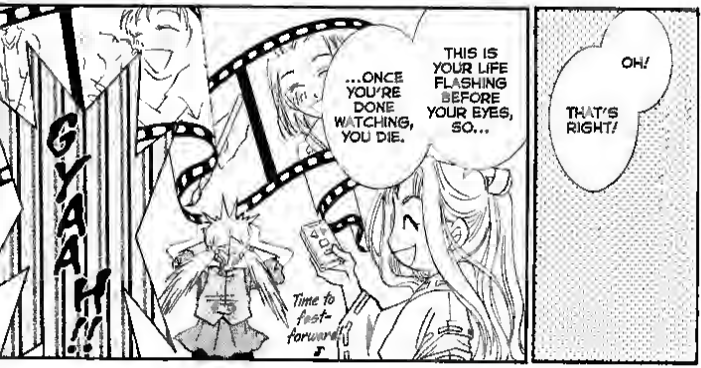
...EVEN THOUGH BINDING TO SHINKU GANE... TURNED ME BACK INTO A KID...
...AND MADE ME FEEL UNSURE ABOUT EVERYTHING...
...I WAS STILL HAPPY.
BECAUSE IT FELT LIKE...
...I'D FOUND A POWER ALL MY OWN.
YOU WANT...
...POWER? IS THAT IT?
WHAT!?
WHO'S THERE!?
WHO SAID THAT!?
IF YOU FOLLOW MY RULES...

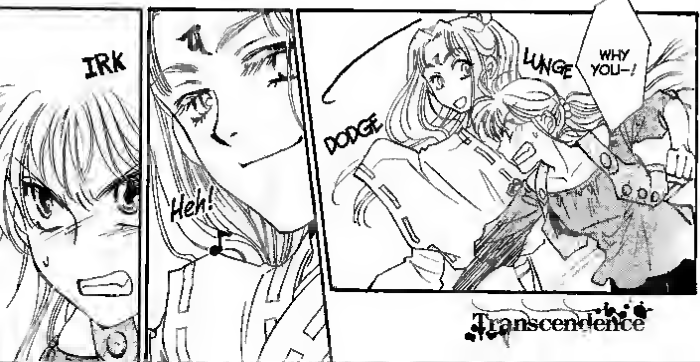
...I WOULD NOT MIND GIVING IT.
WHA ...
HUH!?

Oh, how shall I put this...?
WELL, I'M...
ME?
WH... WHO'R YOU!?
HOW DARE YOU RANDOMLY ENTER MY PSYCHE!
I GUESS YOU COULD SAY...I'M THE SPIRIT OF SHIROGANE.
Simple
Heh!
YOU JUST MADE THAT UP!!
And don't you "Heh!" me!
I don't trust you...
But it's true!!
WOULDN'T WE JUST BE REINSTATING OUR PACT ALL OVER AGAIN?
NO.
THEN MAKE A PACT WITH ME.
YOU WANT POWER, RIGHT?
BACK TO BUSI-NESS!


I WON'T CONSUME YOU ANY-MORE.
YOU'LL BE SPINNING ME.
WE'LL TIE...
...OUR TRUE STRINGS OF FATE TOGETHER.
WE'RE GOING TO TIE...
TURN
ARE YOU THE ONE WHO MAKES IT HAPPEN?
HOW WOULD THAT WORK?
SO...
OUR STRINGS OF FATE TOGETHER?


WHAT !?
CATCH ME AND I'LL TELL YOU! ♡


GYAAH!!
...ONCE YOU'RE DONE WATCHING, YOU DIE.
THIS IS YOUR LIFE FLASHING BEFORE YOUR EYES, SO...
Time to fast-forward!
OH! THAT'S RIGHT!


IRK
Heh!
DODGE
LUNGE
WHY YOU–!

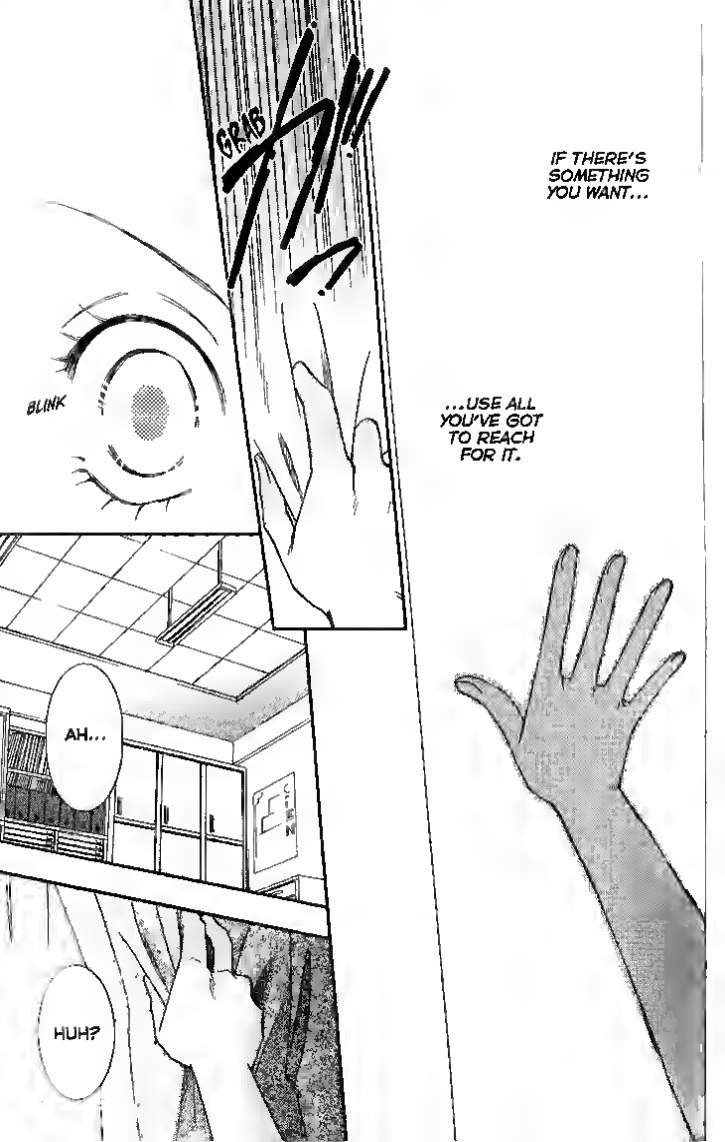
Hee hee! Catch me if you can!
Ha ha ha ha!
HOP
Wait! No!!
LIMP
IT'S NO USE.
HUFF
HUFF
PANT
PANT
WITH ALL HER HOPPING AND TELE-PORTING ...
...I JUST CAN'T CATCH HER.
Grrr..
WHAT DID SHE MEAN...
...OUR TRUE STRINGS OF FATE?
THE MOST POWERFUL STRING OF FATE IN THIS WORLD IS...

THAT'S IT!
THE ONE CONNECTED TO PEOPLE'S WILL...
THE MOST POWERFUL STRING OF FATE IS...

WHAT I LACKED WASN'T...
...SIZE, HEIGHT OR STRENGTH.
IT WAS A STRONG WILL.
TO HELP ME REACH.
AND PROTECT.
AND BECOME NECESSARY.
ONE THAT COULD NEVER BE KNOCKED DOWN...
...OR SEVERED.
WHIP

A THREAD OF STEEL!
COME!
SHIRO-GANE!
Huh.

Transcendence

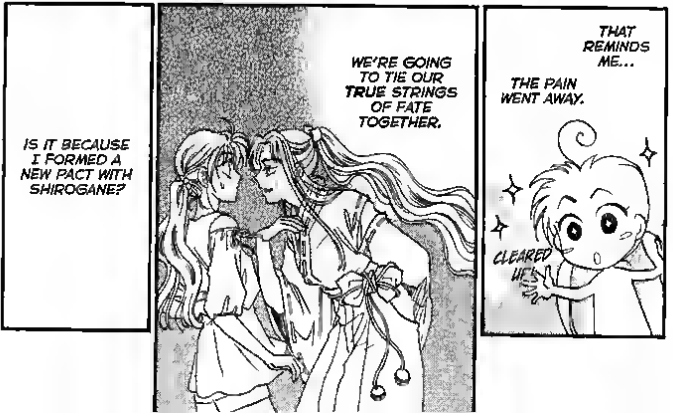

GRAB
IF THERE'S SOMETHING YOU WANT...
BLINK
...USE ALL YOU'VE GOT TO REACH FOR IT.
AH...
OPEN
HUH?

IF YOU DO IT NOW...
...I KNOW YOU'LL REACH IT.
Eighth Binding / end

Ninth Binding
縛りの玖
しば　きゅう

S...
SORRY!!
THUMP
WH... WHAT DID I DO!?
THUMP
THUMP
EEE
EEK!!

I CAME TO CHECK ON YOU.
ARE YOU FEELING BETTER?
!


IS IT BECAUSE I FORMED A NEW PACT WITH SHIROGANE?
WE'RE GOING TO TIE OUR TRUE STRINGS OF FATE TOGETHER.
THAT REMINDS ME...
THE PAIN WENT AWAY.
CLEARED UP

UM... MASTER?
A LITTLE WHILE AGO, THE SPIRIT OF SHIROGA-
!
GRAB
HUH!?
WHAT THE...!?
CRACK
BOOM

HERE...
...TOO?
HUH!?
SO IT'S COME HERE, TOO, HAS IT?
WH...
WHAT WAS THAT!?
DAAAANG.
IT'S LIKE A HURRICANE PASSED THROUGH HERE...
TMP
TMP

WE HAVE MERCHANDISE FLYING AROUND OVER THERE.
AND THE ESCALATORS RUNNING BACKWARDS OVER HERE!
I THOUGHT YOU'D EXORCISED THIS PLACE FOR ME!
SUPERNATURAL STUFF IS HAPPENING EVERYWHERE!!
Oh, it's the manager.
IT'S THE POLTERGEIST !!
PANIC
PANIC
...REALLY BE WAKANA-CHAN'S DOING?
BUT COULD THIS...
You're already in a panic.
...THERE'LL BE PANIC AND I'LL END UP BEING FIRED! I'LL LOSE THE LOAN ON MY HOUSE!!
...IF THIS KEEPS UP...
WE'VE KEPT THE CUSTOMERS CALM BY SAYING IT'S A SECURITY MALFUNCTION, BUT...
EEEEEEK!

GYAAAH!!
THAT'S NOT ALL.
DRIBBLE
DRIBBLE
You didn't waste any time saving your own butt.
HE DIDN'T AVOID THE GLASS FAST ENOUGH.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT HIM.
HA
HA
HA
T... TSUNA!?
YOU HAVE TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL!
DIDN'T YOU HEAR HIM? I'M FINE.
I COULD LICK A LITTLE SCRATCH LIKE THIS BETTER.
WHIP
DON'T BE STUPID!
SEE? JUST A LICK-
STICK
LICK
WHAAAA!

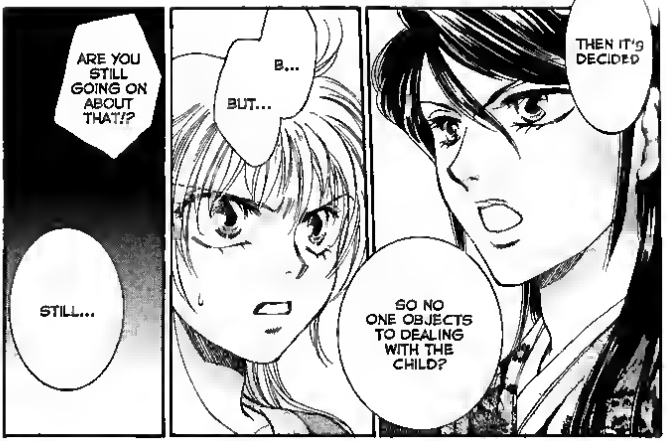
ZAP
BE GONE, FOUL BEAST!
VOOM
SUCK
GYAAAH!
SSHHH
TH... THAT THING JUST NOW...
...WASN'T WAKANA-CHAN, RIGHT?
NO, NO.
THIS JUST PROVES ...

I felt it the second I stepped inside
...THAT THIS BUILDING'S STRUCTURE IS OFF.
THE STRUCTURE!?
PLACES WHERE MANY PEOPLE GATHER ...
... ALWAYS ATTRACT SPIRITS.
AND IF THEY ARE THE SITE OF A HEINOUS EVENT...
...ALL SORTS OF SPIRITS CAN BE DRAWN IN.
THIS SHOPPING MALL...
...IS LIKE A MAZE...
...AND IT HAS DISTURBINGLY FEW WINDOWS AND EXITS.
THE SPIRITS DRIFT IN...
...AND CAN'T GET OUT.
WH...
WHAT SHOULD I DO!?
How could you support a place like this!?
I didn't know!!
Ha!

PLEASE.
I WAS JOKING.
That was low...
YOU'RE ASKING TOO MUCH!!
WELL, I SUGGEST WE DEMOLISH THE KIMON AND BACK KIMON QUARTERS FOR VENTILATION.*

*See Translator's Notes

WE'LL DECIDE HOW TO DEAL WITH THE BUILDING'S STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS AFTER-WARD.
ONCE THAT'S DONE, WE DEAL WITH THE SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM.
WE EXORCISE THE GHOST GIRL.
THAT SHOULD SETTLE THIS MESS ONCE AND FOR ALL.


ARE YOU STILL GOING ON ABOUT THAT!?
STILL...
B...
BUT...
SO NO ONE OBJECTS TO DEALING WITH THE CHILD?
THEN IT'S DECIDED

WHILE WE SPLIT UP INTO GROUPS TO SUPPRESS THEM...
WE CAN'T ALLOW THE SPIRITS HERE TO CONTINUE RUNNING AMOK.

Whaa...?!
HUH !?
...YOU CAN PUT UP THE MAGIC SEALS, CHIKO-CHAN. ♡

STICK
WHY THAT...!!
"JUST PUT THEM WHERE WE TELL YOU."
ACTING LIKE THIS IS MY FIRST ASSIGNMENT!!
"EVEN A LITTLE KID...
...COULD DO IT."
THREE DOWN!
EASY!
I HAVE TO MOVE FAST!
I CAN'T DENY...
...THIS PLACE FEELS WEIRDER AND WEIRDER AS I GO ON.
ONE MORE TO GO!

THIS LAST ONE IS...
PENTHOU GARDEN
IT SHOULD BE ON THE RIGHT-HAND AISLE...
!?

HEY!!
ARE YOU THERE!?
WAKANA-CHAN!?
...
WAKANA-CHAN'S!
THIS IS...
TURN
WAKANA-CHA-

.....
That must be his daughter.
Indeed.
DAD...
WELL, WELL.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE HERE.
HUH?
EVERYTHING GOING WELL WITH THE OTHERS?
SO?
I WAS SURPRISED WHEN THAT MAN ASKED TO TAKE CHARGE OF YOU.
BUT I COULDN'T PASS UP THE CHANCE.
TRY NOT TO MESS IT UP.
I'M SHOCKED ...
...TO HEAR THAT HE MAY BE WORRIED ABOUT ME.
I SEE. GOOD.
OH, UH... SURE.
THE OTHERS?
HE MUST MEAN THE TYERS.

THEY'RE SUPPORTED BY A MAJOR ONMYO FAMILY.
IF I CAN WIN THEIR FAVOR, I'LL HAVE MY BEST BACKER YET.
MESS IT UP?
...WHOSE INFLUENCE REACHES THE VERY CORE OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT!?
YOU MEAN THE FAMILY...
THAT'S FANTASTIC!
WHAT...?
...AT A TIME LIKE THIS?
YOU'D REALLY USE ME...
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
HE'S USING THIS TO BENEFIT HIS COMPANY?

THIS IS SO TYPICAL.
HE DOESN'T CONSIDER MY FEELINGS FOR A SECOND.
IT'S THE LEAST YOU CAN DO FOR ME.
DAD...
I...
IT'S ALWAYS WHAT HE WANTS, SO HE JUST PUSHES ME AROUND.
I RAISED YOU, AFTER ALL.
DAD, I...

...WISH HE WOULD GO AWAY FOREVER, RIGHT?
WAKANA-CHAN!

CLACK
CLACK
SHOCK
!?
TMP
TMP
WHO IS THIS KID?
WH...
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE!?
THE SPIRITS...
THEY'RE ALL GATHERING!
CHILL

...YOU SHOULD GET RID OF!!
YOU HATE YOUR DADDY, RIGHT?
SLITHER
CREEP
SLITHER
WELL, THINGS YOU HATE...

SSHHH
BZZT
Phew...
AKEO-SAN!
YOU FOUND SOME TOO?
YEAH. JUST WHEN I THOUGHT THE SPIRITS WERE CALMING DOWN...
...I REALIZED THEY WERE GATHERING OVER THERE.
CREEEEP
I JUST HOPE THEY DON'T...
... CROSS PATHS WITH CHIKO-CHAN.
PENTHOUSE GARDEN

WAAAAH!!
THP
THP
THP
SAVE UUUS!!
I GUESS I REALLY CALLED IT.

I HATE...
...ADULTS.
GREAT. SHE'S COMPLETELY POSSESSED!
HOW MUCH MORE USELESS CAN SHE GET!?
D...
DO SOME-THING!
SQUEEZE!
HURRY!

WELL, WITH CHIKO-CHAN USING HIM AS A SHIELD...
...WE CAN'T ATTACK.
IN TERMS OF ABILITY, THAT CHILD GHOST IS FAR SUPERIOR.
QUIT ACTING LIKE YOU'RE OKAY WITH THIS!
TWITCH
HATE...
HATE...
DESPISE...
AKE-NII?
PASS
SQUEEZE
GUUH...
AAAH!

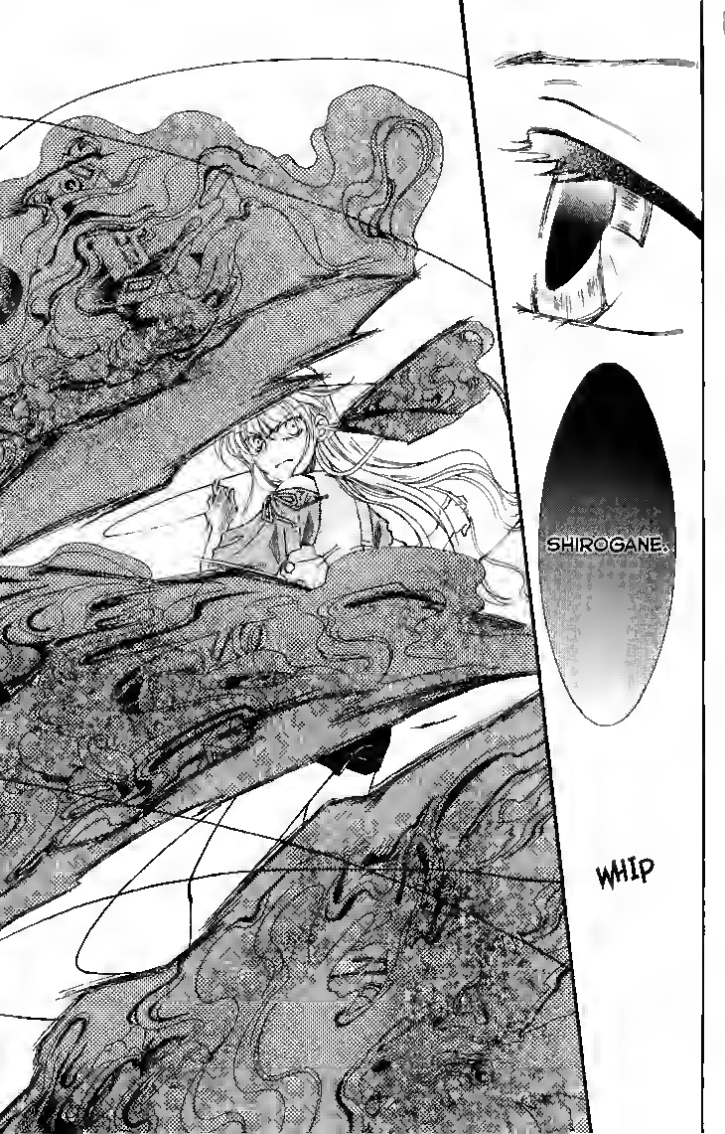
WAIT! YOU WOULDN'T!
FWOOSH
WHIP
AKE-NII!!
CHIKO'S RIGHT THERE!
SLICE

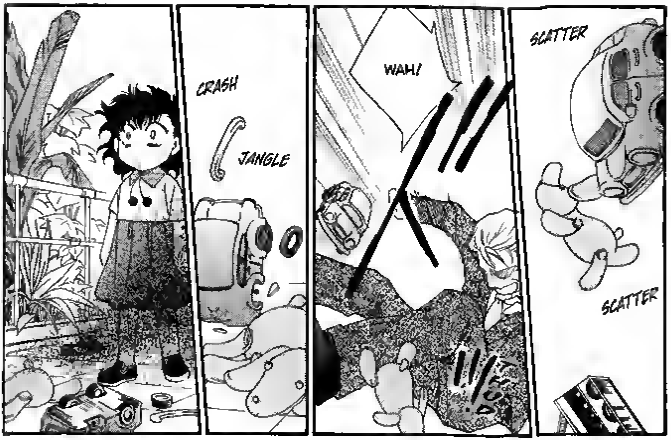
HUH!?
WHERE'D HE AIM ...?
FWOOSH
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
BEEP
!!
SSSHHH

DON'T WORRY.
THAT WON'T STOP THIS SPIRIT!
THE SPRINKLERS !?

IT'S RAINING...
SSSHHH
AH...
CHIYAKO WILL UNDERSTAND.

NO.
IT'S BECAUSE A NEW STRENGTH HAS AWAKENED INSIDE ME.
DID I JUST GET TALLER?
...ALWAYS SO SMALL?
WAS THIS MAN...
JUST LIKE HOW THE RAIN...
...QUENCHES THE DRY, CRACKED EARTH.
I HAVE SOMEONE WHO GIVES ME STRENGTH.


SHIROGANE.
WHIP

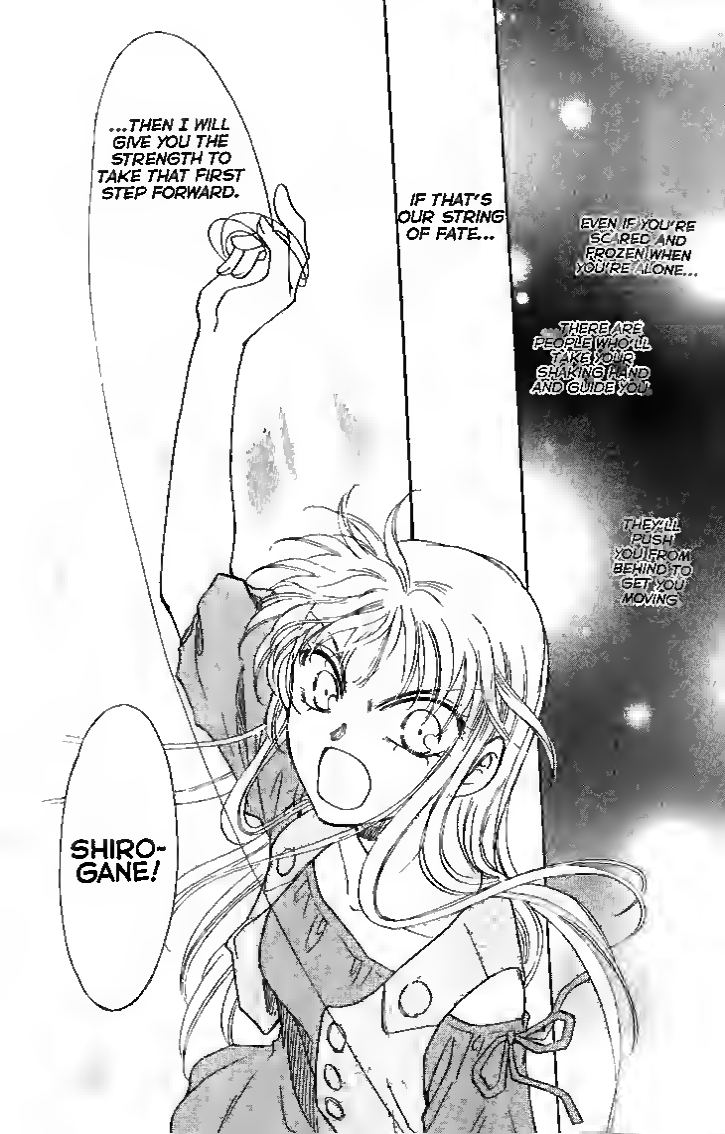

CRASH
JANGLE
WAH!
SCATTER
SCATTER

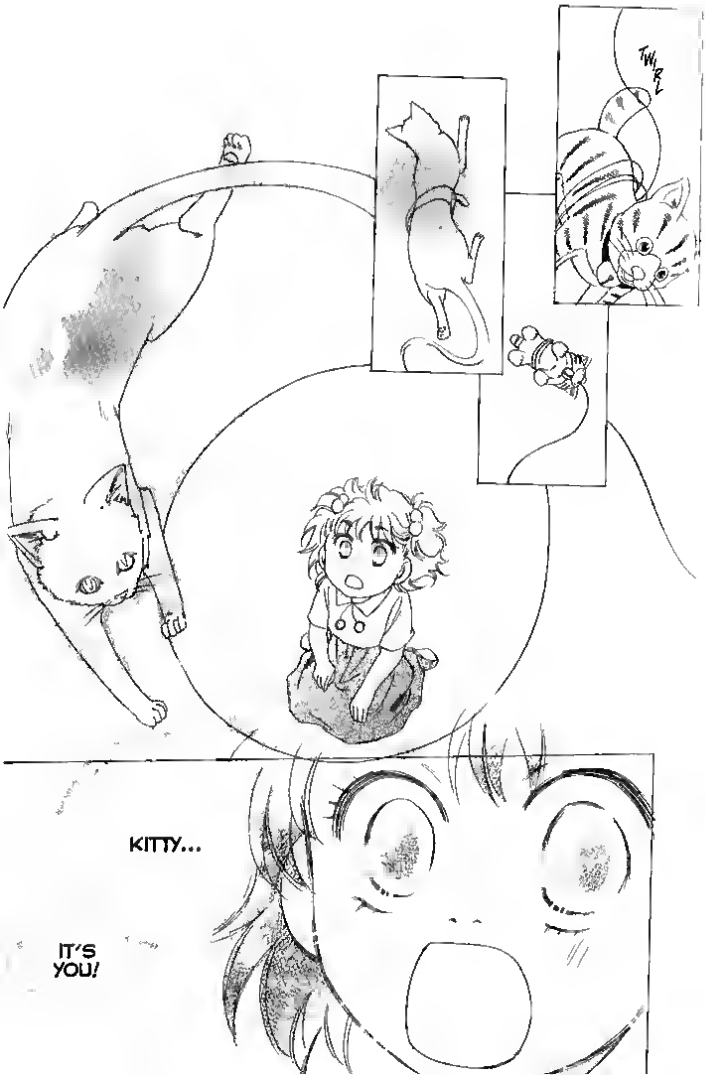
WHY...?
DON'T YOU HATE YOUR DADDY?
HE SHOULD GO AWA-
HE SHOULD GO AWAY.
I'VE THOUGHT THAT BEFORE.

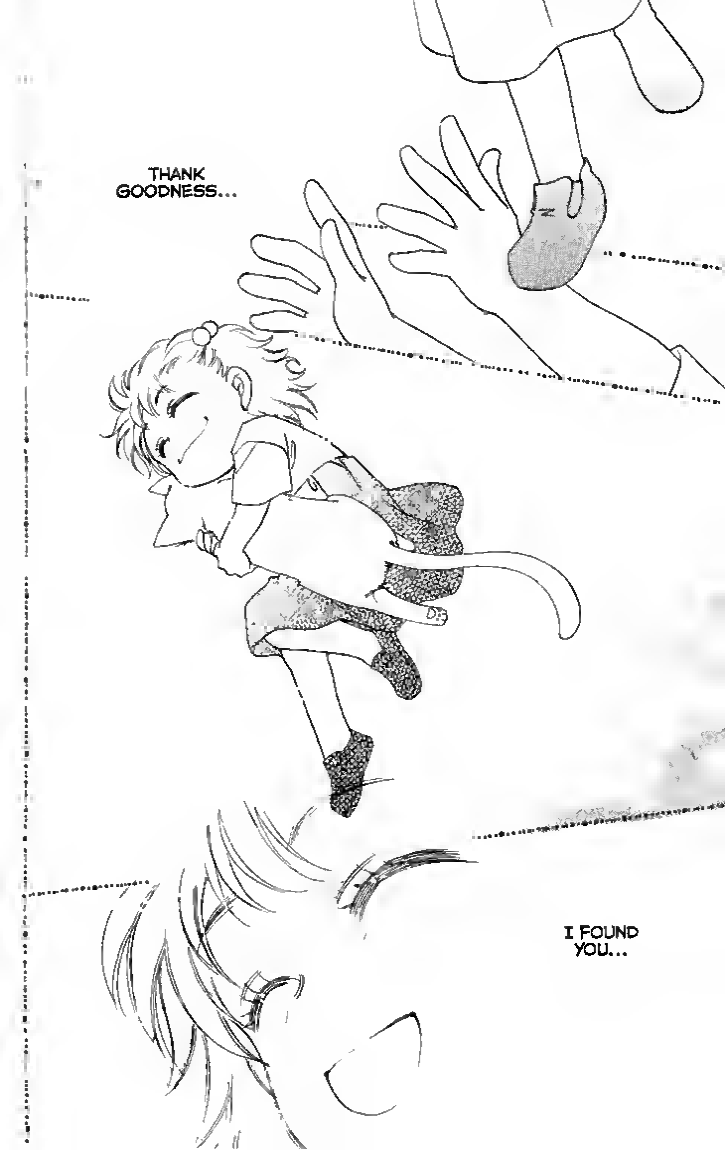
NOW I UNDERSTAND...
...THAT IT WOULDN'T CHANGE ANYTHING.
J-
FLICK
BUT...
IF I WERE YOUR AGE...
...I'D PROBABLY BE THINKING THAT NOW.
IF ALL I HAD IN THE WORLD WAS MY DAD...
...I MIGHT'VE GONE THROUGH WITH IT.

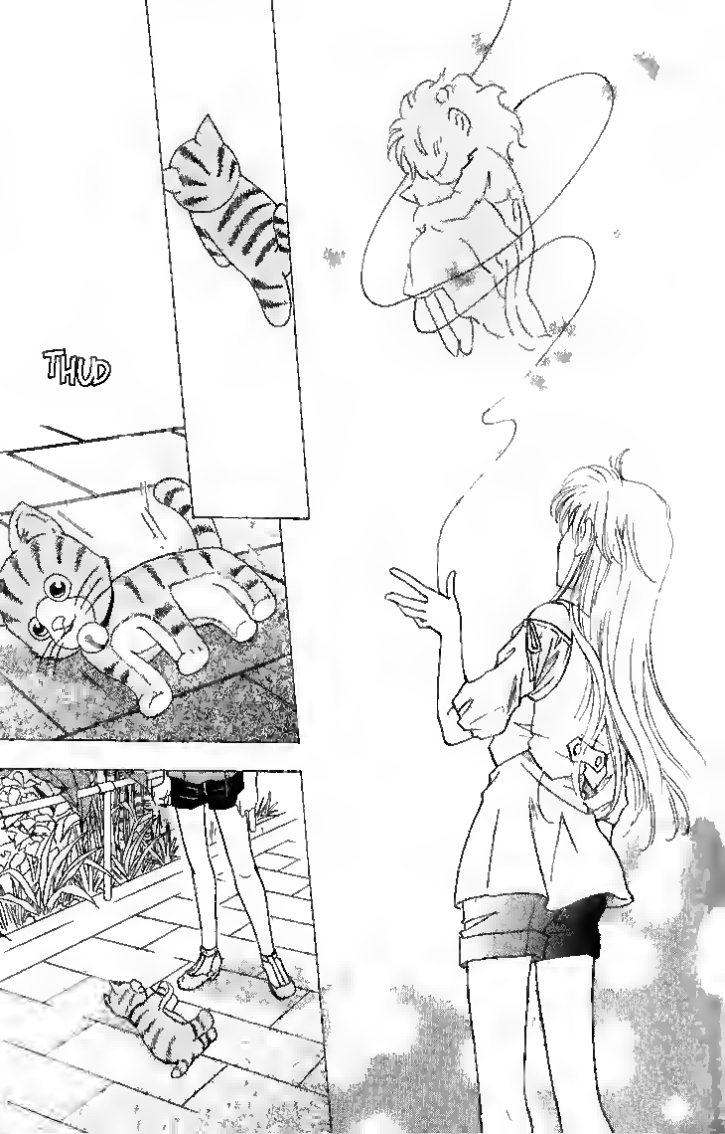
THUNK
NO...
NO, I'M SCARED...
ARE YOU MAD AT ME?
DON'T BE LIKE MY DADDY...
WAS I A BAD GIRL?
W...
WHY?
WOBBLE

I'M SCARED!
I KNOW.
IT'S SCARY BY YOURSELF.
THAT'S WHY WE CAME TO YOU.
IT'S...
...THE STRING OF FATE THAT CONNECTS US TO EACH OTHER.
STRING ..?

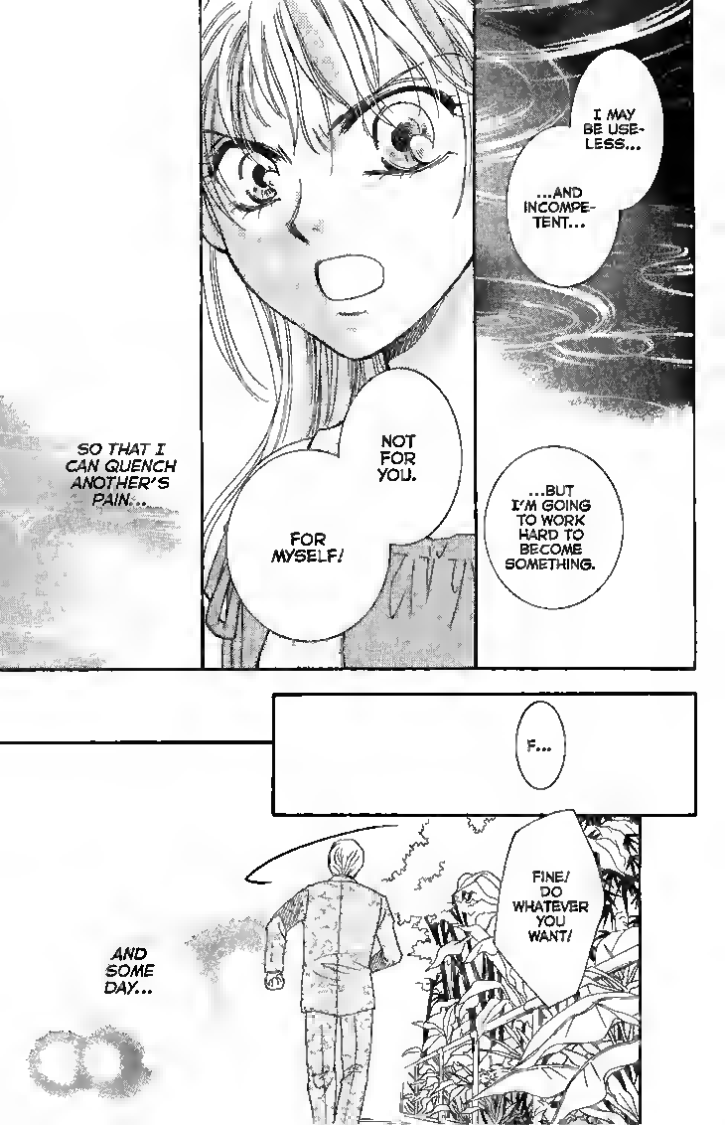

...THEN I WILL GIVE YOU THE STRENGTH TO TAKE THAT FIRST STEP FORWARD.
IF THAT'S OUR STRING OF FATE...
EVEN IF YOU'RE SCARED AND FROZEN WHEN YOU'RE ALONE...
THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO'LL TAKE YOUR SHAKING HAND AND GUIDE YOU.
THEY'LL PUSH YOU FROM BEHIND TO GET YOU MOVING.
SHIRO-GANE!


TWIRL
KITTY...
IT'S YOU!


THANK GOODNESS...
I FOUND YOU...

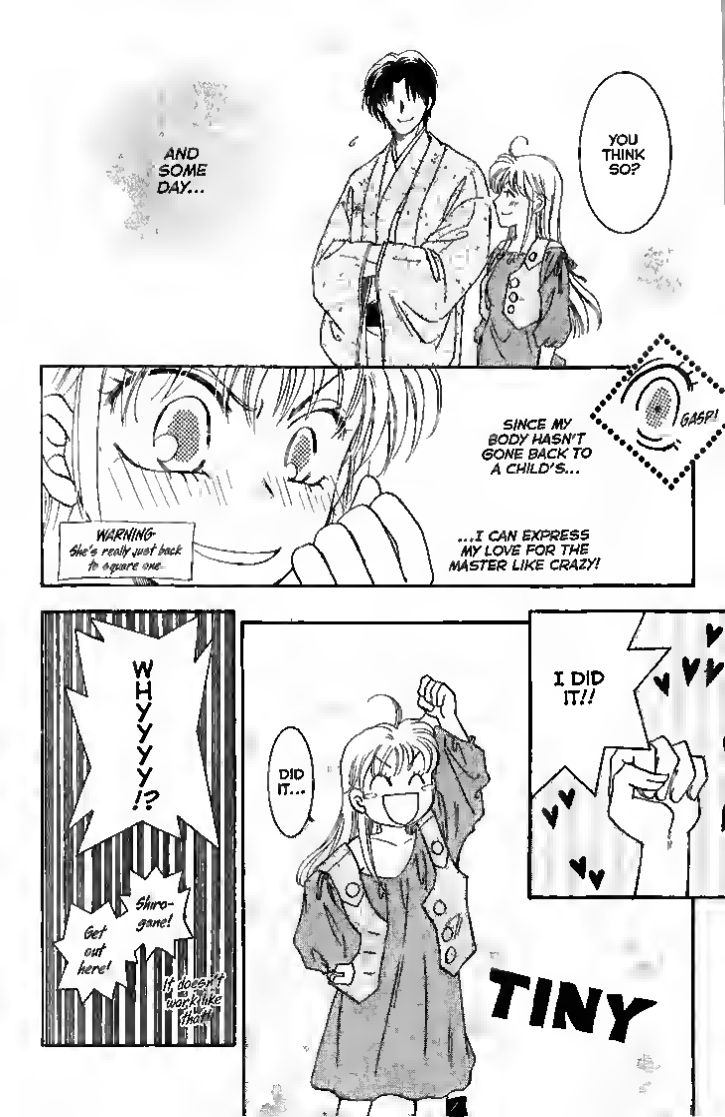

THUD

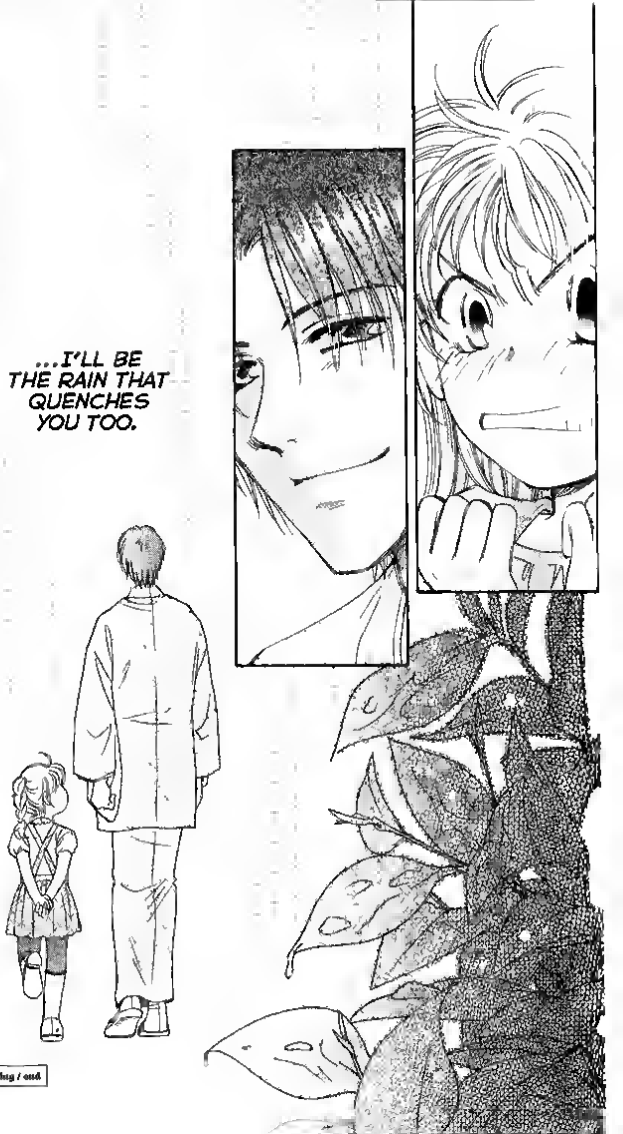
SHE HEALED HER SOUL ...
WOOOW ...
STEP
FATHER.
JUMP
I'M GOING...
...WITH THE MASTER TO BECOME A SPINNER OF THE FIVE COLORED THREADS.
I'M NOT COMING HOME!


I MAY BE USE-LESS...
...AND INCOMPE-TENT...
...BUT I'M GOING TO WORK HARD TO BECOME SOMETHING.
NOT FOR YOU.
FOR MYSELF!
SO THAT I CAN QUENCH ANOTHER'S PAIN...
F...
FINE! DO WHATEVER YOU WANT!
AND SOME DAY...

AND SO...
BOW
MY BEST REGARDS FOR A GREAT PARTNERSHIP!
TSK!
Did you just click your tongue at me?
You did, didn't you?
TO BECOME A SPINNER, YOU NEED PERMISSION FROM THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY!
WITHOUT HER ACKNOW-LEDGMENT, YOU'LL GET NOWHERE!
Okay, okay...
YOU REMEMBERED...
...THE FIRST TIME WE MET.

LIKE YOU, MASTER!
"RAIN SHOWERS THE SPIRIT, AND WATERS THE SOUL."


AND SOME DAY...
YOU THINK SO?
GASP!
SINCE MY BODY HASN'T GONE BACK TO A CHILD'S...
...I CAN EXPRESS MY LOVE FOR THE MASTER LIKE CRAZY!
WARNING- She's really just back to square one.
WHYYYY!?
Shirogane!
Get out here!
It doesn't work like that!
DID IT...
I DID IT!!
TINY


...I'LL BE THE RAIN THAT QUENCHES YOU TOO.

KOUREN

KOUREN : SOZORO

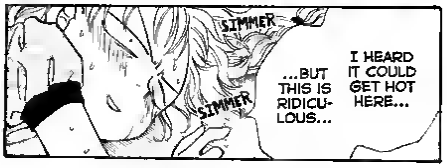
I DON'T SEE A PROBLEM WITH THAT.
SO SHE WANTS TO BE AN ONMYOJI.
HAVING A NATURAL AFFINITY DOESN'T MAKE YOU QUALIFIED.
THERE'S NO WAY SHE CAN DO IT!
SO...
WHAT'S YOUR OPINION, AKEO-SAN?
GGGGGGGGG
Tenth Binding
縛りの拾

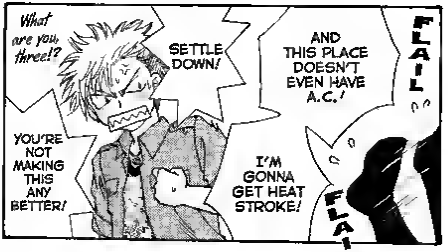
縛りの花

Tenth Binding

CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
IT'S SO...

YOU GUESSED IT.





WE'RE IN KYOTO.

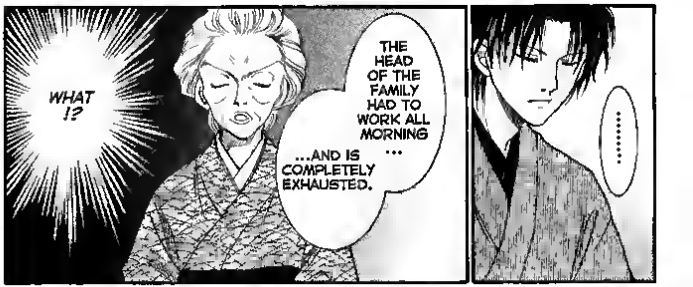
THE SACRED HOLDER OF THE FIVE COLORED THREADS...
...AND HEAD OF THE ONMYO HOUSEHOLD DID SUMMON US...
...SO THUS DID WE TRAVEL HENCE TO THIS GREAT AND MIGHTY KYOTO
Very weird formal.
SERIOUSLY, WHAT GIVES?
WE'VE BEEN WAITING HERE SINCE THE CRACK OF DAWN!
WHEN DO WE GET TO SEE THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY?
UGH!
BE PREPARED TO WAIT AT LEAST THREE DAYS.
The wait can be months long!
COMPLAINING ABOUT THIS MILD HEAT... ... SHOWS HOW FRAGILE YOU ARE!
You're in no shape to be an Onmyoji!
COOL
WEEE

YOU SNEAKY--!!
...ONE OF THESE.
YOINK
ICE PACK
OF COURSE, IT HELPS THAT YOU'RE WEARING...
That's low...
Totally natural
ICE PACK
ICE PACK
I'm wearing two of them, myself

HEY!
I DIDN'T EVEN WANT TO COME!
ESPECIALLY TO A PLACE THIS STUFFY!
WHAT DO YOU EXPECT, WHEN I'M FORCED TO ACCOMPANY YOU!?
Quiet, you!

LOOM
IF YOU'RE FEELING SO CRAMPED...
...I'LL GIVE YOU A SHOULDER RUB, IF YOU LIKE...

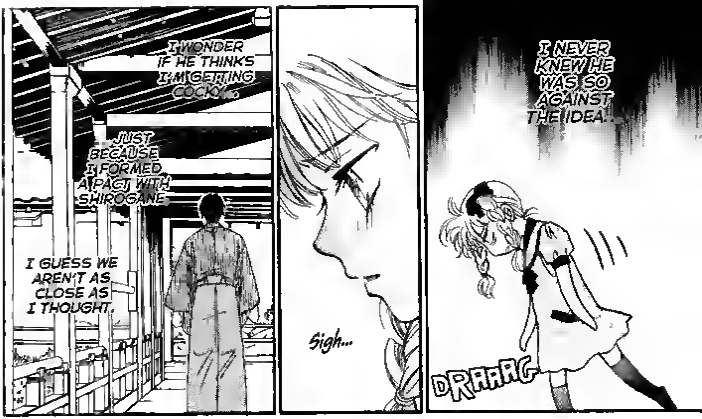
AH!!
GLARE
IS THIS THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY!?
Scary
A... W-W-W... AWAJI-SAMA!
EEEEEK!!
I... I-I-I'M FINE!
OH, I GUESS I'M WRONG.
Tsuna?


WHAT!?
THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY HAD TO WORK ALL MORNING ...
...AND IS COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED.
.....

PLEASE TRY AGAIN TOMORROW
ARE YOU KIDDING ME!?
THEY'RE CANCEL-ING!?
TURN
W... WAIT A MINUTE!
AT THIS RATE, WHO KNOWS HOW LONG WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT?
I SAID, WA—
WE'RE LEAVING.
STEP

...IS COMPLETELY AGAINST MY BECOMING AN ONMYOJI.
WHY!?
HE'S STILL ANGRY.
EVER SINCE WE GOT TO KYOTO...
NO, EVEN BEFORE THAT...
...HE'S BEEN IN A BAD MOOD.
THE MASTER...
HE'S SO TENSE, IT SCARES ME.
HE WON'T EVEN LOOK ME IN THE EYE.

I THOUGHT YOU *WANTED* TO TEACH ME HOW TO USE SHIROGANE–
ACCIDENT OR NOT, YOUR PACT WITH SHIROGANE... ...IS DANGEROUS AS LONG AS YOU CAN'T CONTROL IT.
TEACHING YOU CONTROL IS NOT ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT YOU BECOME AN ONMYOJI.
BUT MASTER ...
...I PROMISE I'LL...
I JUST WANT TO BE HELPFUL TO HIM.
THE TRUTH IS...
I DON'T WANT YOU ANY MORE INVOLVED THAN YOU ALREADY ARE!


I WONDER IF HE THINKS I'M GETTING COCKY...
JUST BECAUSE I FORMED A PACT WITH SHIROGANE
I GUESS WE AREN'T AS CLOSE AS I THOUGHT.
Sigh...
I NEVER KNEW HE WAS SO AGAINST THE IDEA.
DRRRRG

WHEN HE SAID HE'D PROTECT ME...
...WHAT DID HE MEAN?

Hee Hee!
TRIP
WHOA!
Close one!
Heh
Heh
Heh
THAT MUST BE HER.
ONE OF THE THREAD MEMBERS.
SHE'S JUST A KID.
NOT AGAIN.
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO CALL IT MALICE OR WHAT...
LIKE UNWELCOME GUESTS.
...BUT WE'VE BEEN TREATED THIS WAY SINCE WE GOT TO KYOTO.
.....
MAYBE IT'S JUST ME, BUT...
WELL ...

...EVEN THE MENU...
...DOESN'T FEEL VERY WELCOMING.
Like they're trying to drive us out with awful food.
And it's already cold.
WHEN I GOT HERE, I DISCOVERED ...
...THE MASTER, AYA-SAN, AND ISORA-SAN ARE DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE HEAD FAMILY.
THEY'RE FROM KYOTO.
ON THE OTHER HAND, TSUNA'S FROM A BRANCH FAMILY AND GREW UP SOMEWHERE ELSE.
THE TWO OF US ARE THE ONLY ACTUAL GUESTS IN THE MASTER'S HOME.
YOU'D THINK GETTING TO STAY IN HIS HOME...
To be honest—
...WOULD BE A THRILLING OPPORTUNITY.
IF YOU COMPLAIN ABOUT THIS KIND OF TREATMENT...
... YOU'LL NEVER SURVIVE HERE.

TSUNA?
YOU'RE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST TOO?
THIS FAMILY PLACES HUGE VALUE ON SOCIAL STATUS.
THEY PRIDE THEMSELVES ON THEIR ANCIENT PEDIGREE.
Can't you tell?
MAYBE..
I'M NOT...
...HUNGRY ANYMORE.
CLACK
...I SHOULD NEVER HAVE COME.
COME ON, NOT YOU TOO, CHIKO.
AKE-NII DIDN'T SHOW UP EITHER.
OH WELL.
SINCE HE'S TREATED SO BADLY WHENEVER HE COMES HERE...
...I DON'T BLAME HIM FOR BEING IN A BAD MOOD.
CHOMP
TREATED BADLY!?

WELL....
THERE'S KIND OF A PATTERN IN WHICH...
...THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY SUMMONS HIM AND THEN SENDS HIM AWAY WITHOUT SEEING HIM.
WHAT!?
The Head of the Family, duh.
Who does she think she is!?
THE TRUTH IS...
WELL...
WHY WOULD SHE DO THAT?
...DON'T GET ALONG!
...THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY AND AKE-NI...

IT'S NOT FAIR TO TALK ABOUT HIM BEHIND HIS BACK.
OH, BUT DON'T TELL HIM YOU KNOW THAT!
AKE-NII HAS...
...A COMPLICATED PAST WITH HER.
WHAT!?
How childish!!
A COMPLICATED PAST?
OH, OKAY...
I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY FAMILY MEMBERS.
THERE ARE PLENTY OF SERVANTS, BUT...
OR THIS HOUSE.
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING...
...ABOUT THE MASTER.
THAT ONLY REMINDS ME...
...HOW LITTLE I KNOW ABOUT THESE GUYS...
If you won't eat it, I will!

IS MY DESIRE TO KNOW HIM BETTER
JUST ANNOYING HIM?
WHAT DOES HE THINK ABOUT?
WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS HE REALLY?
AND WHAT DOES HE THINK ABOUT ME?
I DON'T WANT YOU ANY MORE INVOLVED THAN YOU ALREADY ARE!
ACHE

ALL THIS THINKING ...
...HAS SCRAMBLED MY BRAINS!
MY BODY'S BURNING UP.
AND MY STOMACH HURTS.
I think I'm gonna be sick.
Uuuugh...
COULD I BE LOSING MY MIND?
DIZZY
DIZZY
IT'S CALLED OVER-HEATING.
DIZZY
UUUGH, WHAT DO I DO?
I'LL START WITH SOME WATER, I GUESS...
WOBBLE
I wonder if they have any sports drinks.
!

HUH?
THE MASTER'S LIGHT IS STILL ON.
I GUESS HE'S STILL UP.
SOMEONE'S THERE.
SHE MUST BE PART OF THE STAFF.
WHY'S SHE ACTING SO SNEAKY?
SNEAK
SNEAK
REACH
OH.
THANK YOU SO MUCH...
!
I'M SERIOUSLY REACHING MY LIMIT...
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
UUUUGH...

I TAKE IT YOU DON'T...
...WORK HERE?

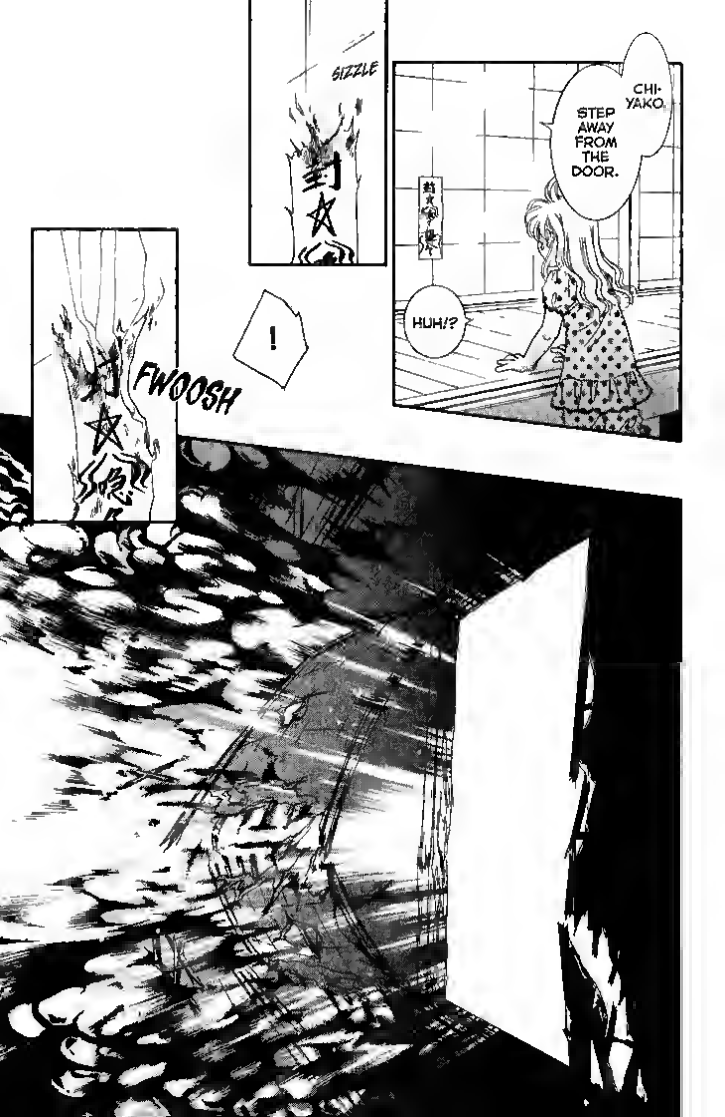
UWAAAAAH!!
WHAT THE-!?
THAT VOICE...
CHIYAKO!?
GRAB
STARTLE
!?
RATTLE
!
IT WON'T OPEN!
RATTLE
WHAT'S GOING ON!?
RATTLE

SWOOSH
A...A DEMON!
I'M BEING ATTACKED BY A DEMON!
CHIYAKO
BANG
WHAT'S HAPPENING !?
BANG
TURN
MASTER !?
COULD IT HAVE BROKEN THROUGH?
Eeek!
I need some beans to get rid of this demon!*
IMPOSSIBLE.
THERE SHOULD BE A BARRIER AROUND THIS PLACE
*See Translator's Notes
PLEASE HELP ME!
TMP TMP
!!
IS ANYBODY THERE !?

WHAAAAAAT!?
SLAM
.....
I KNOW I'M NOT WELCOME, BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS!
How mean!
THIS MUST BE A JOKE
HE SHUT ME OUT!?
SHIRO...
...GANE!!
OKAY, YOU ASKED FOR IT...!
TURN

I FORGOT ...
...I'VE GOT HEAT STROKE...
Uhhh...
FAINT
WHAAAAH...
LIMP
LIMP
WHAT'S THIS?
A CHARM SLIP?
OH!
THAT WOMAN STUCK IT HERE!
封
怨

THE DEMON DIDN'T BREAK THROUGH THE BARRIER!
A CHARM
I SEE NOW!
SOMEONE IN THE HOUSE USED THIS TO INVITE IT IN!
OF ALL THE...
A PLAN THIS DEVIOUS MEANS ONLY ONE PERSON.
THAT...
...WITCH!


SIZZLE
CHI-YAKO.
STEP AWAY FROM THE DOOR.
HUH!?
!
FWOOSH

STANCE

MAS
...
CHILL
MASTER
LIFT
SO...
I WAS RIGHT.

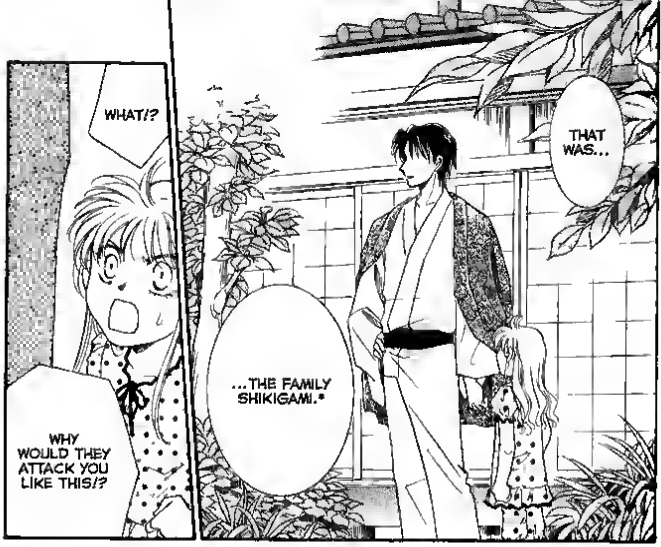
SLAP
TAKE YOUR SICK PRANKS SOMEWHERE ELSE!
IF YOU DON'T LIKE ME, COME AND GET ME YOURSELF!
DON'T FORGET...

YOU HAVE NOT BEEN FORGIVEN...
DON'T FORGET...
FLUSH
BOOM

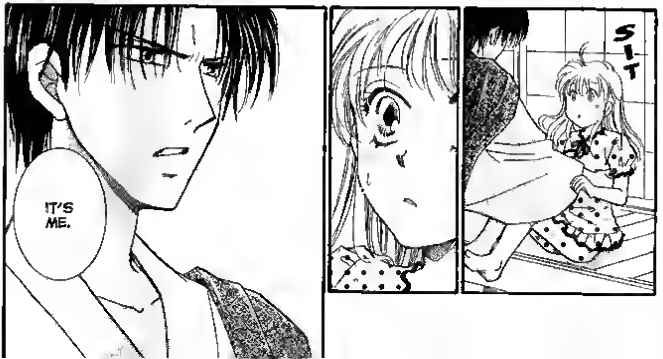
TMP
TMP
MASTER!

WHAT WAS THAT DEMON!?

DON'T WASTE YOUR BREATH!



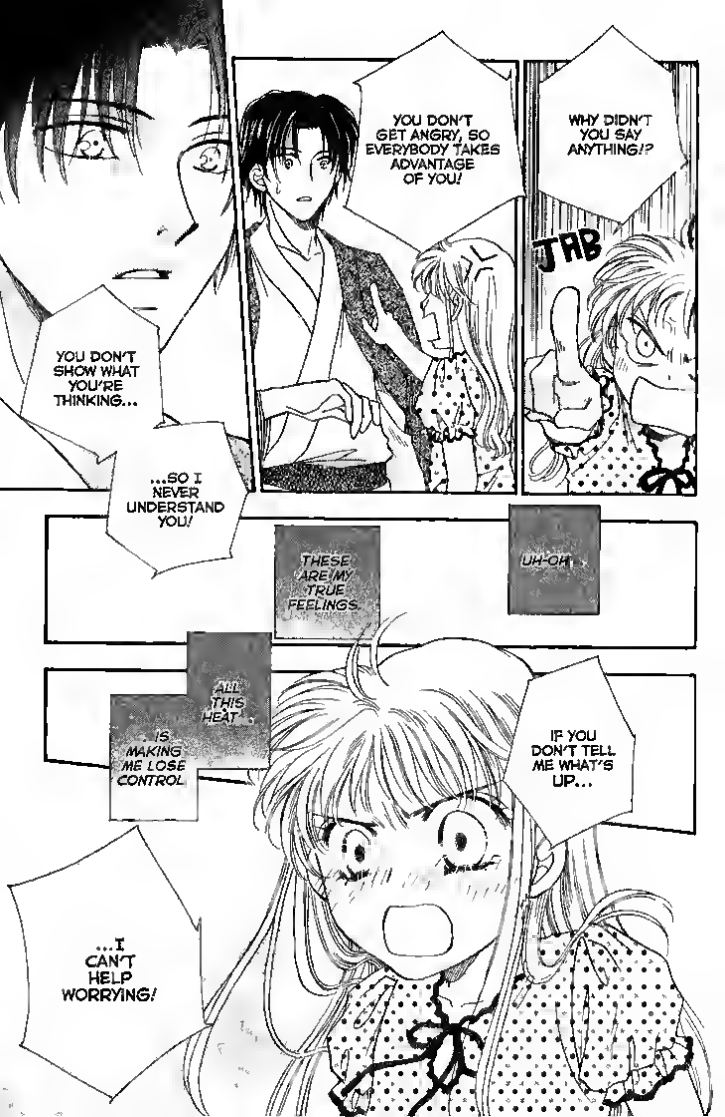
*See Translator's Notes



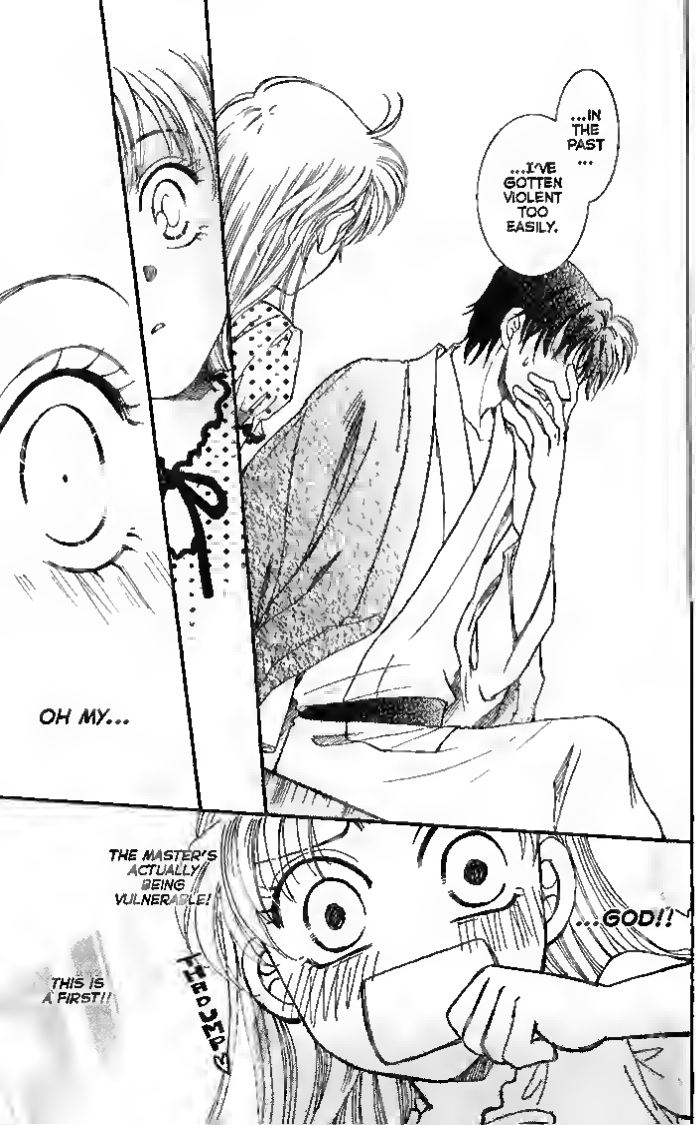
THE HEAD FAMILY CONSIDERS ME...
...AN UNPARDONABLE CRIMINAL.
I SHOULDN'T EVEN EXIST.

I KNEW THAT IF YOU STAYED NEAR ME...
...YOU'D GET HURT TOO.
THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T WANT TO BRING YOU TO KYOTO.
WAIT, SO HE DIDN'T WANT ME INVOLVED...
SINCE HE'S TREATED SO BADLY WHENEVER HE COMES HERE...
...THEY CAN'T PUBLICLY REMOVE ME FROM THE FAMILY.
SINCE I WIELD ONE OF THE THREADS..
...TO KEEP ME SAFE?
ALL OF THOSE HATEFUL LOOKS...
...WEREN'T AIMED AT ME.
THEY WERE AIMED AT THE MASTER.

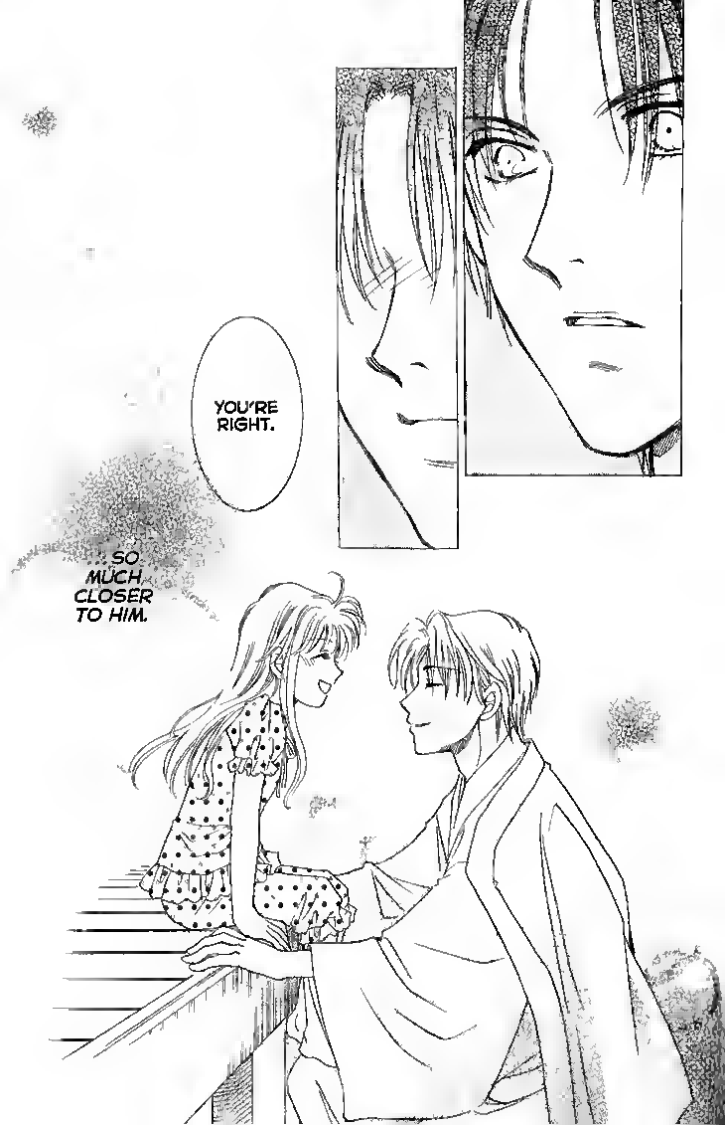
RAAAGE
THAT'S...
I DON'T EXACTLY UNDERSTAND YOUR SITUATION, BUT...
...HARASSING YOU FROM THE SHADOWS IS JUST COWARDLY!
AND GANGING UP ON YOU LIKE THIS!
THAT'S SO MEAN!


YOU DON'T GET ANGRY, SO EVERYBODY TAKES ADVANTAGE OF YOU!
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY ANYTHING!?
JAB
YOU DON'T SHOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING...
...SO I NEVER UNDERSTAND YOU!
THESE ARE MY TRUE FEELINGS.
UH-OH
ALL THIS HEAT
IS MAKING ME LOSE CONTROL
IF YOU DON'T TELL ME WHAT'S UP...
...I CAN'T HELP WORRYING!

THIS GUY...
...IS HOPELESS.
DIZZY
DIZZY
I'm not sure if the heat caused my headache or what...
SINCE YOU'RE ALREADY MAD, THERE'S NO POINT IN ME GETTING MAD, TOO.
WELL...
UH...
I DON'T LET CONFLICT UPSET ME BECAUSE...
...AND TAKE MY PUNISH-MENT.
...I'D RATHER ACT MY AGE...
...MAY NOT BE GALLANT, BUT...
ACTING THIS WAY...
EITHER WAY...


...IN THE PAST ...
...I'VE GOTTEN VIOLENT TOO EASILY.
OH MY...
THE MASTER'S ACTUALLY BEING VULNERABLE!
...GOD!!
THIS IS A FIRST!!
THUMP

IF YOU'RE MAD, I WANT YOU TO SHOW IT.
IF YOU'RE HAPPY, I WANT YOU TO SMILE.
YOUR AGE...
...HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT!
THAT WAY...
...I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE MASTER.
THERE'S SO MUCH...
...I'LL FEEL LIKE WE'RE REALLY IN THIS TOGETHER.
I WANT TO BE...
IS IT OKAY FOR ME TO WANT TO GET CLOSER?
IS IT OKAY THAT I WANT TO SEE MORE SIDES OF HIM?


YOU'RE RIGHT.
...SO MUCH CLOSER TO HIM.

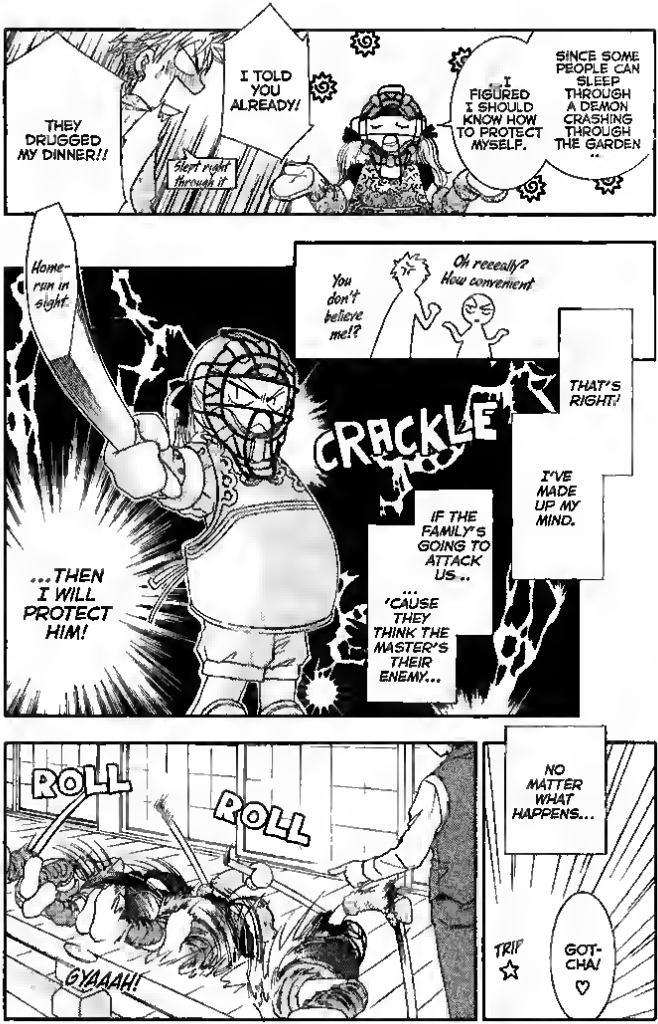
SPLISH
I TOLD YOU.
WRAP
IF YOU GO AFTER CHIKO-CHAN...
... AKEO-SAN WILL GO CRAZY.

I FAILED YOU...
GREAT HEAD...
AWAJI-SAMA.
I KNOW. BUT DON'T WORRY.
IT WAS WORTH IT, TO SEE AKEO-SAN IN ACTION.
WELL?
NADESHIKO-SAMA?
ISN'T IT AMAZING HOW IMMOVABLY...
...HE KEEPS UP THAT IRON MASK?

INDEED.
FLAP
HE ALREADY HAS A GIRL LIKE ME.
WHAT A DESPICABLE MAN HE'S BEING.

Eleventh Binding
縛りの拾壱

WHAT...
...ARE YOU WEARING?
I'M READY TO TAKE ON THE WORLD!
Translation: Don't try to stop me!
BADUM
WELL...
IN ENGLISH, PLEASE.
You're mixing all sorts of styles there.
IF THEY WANT A PIECE OF ME, LET 'EM COME GET IT!
JAB
JAB


THEY DRUGGED MY DINNER!!
I TOLD YOU ALREADY!
Slept right through it.
I FIGURED I SHOULD KNOW HOW TO PROTECT MYSELF.
SINCE SOME PEOPLE CAN SLEEP THROUGH A DEMON CRASHING THROUGH THE GARDEN...
Home-run in sight.
You don't believe me!?
Oh reeeally? How convenient.
CRACKLE
THAT'S RIGHT!
I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.
IF THE FAMILY'S GOING TO ATTACK US...
...'CAUSE THEY THINK THE MASTER'S THEIR ENEMY...
...THEN I WILL PROTECT HIM!
ROLL
ROLL
GYAAAH!
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS...
TRIP
GOT-CHA!

Uuurgh
...
WAIT.
IF YOU PILE ON ALL THOSE LAYERS...
...YOU'LL GIVE YOURSELF HEAT STROKE AGAIN.
Oops!
I DIDN'T SEE YOU LAST NIGHT.
HOW'D YOU KNOW I GOT HEAT STROKE?
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
YOU'D BETTER NOT BE HIDING SOMETHING, AYA-SAN!!
HOLD IT!
WE'D BETTER GO BEFORE SHE CHANGES HER MIND!
OH YEAH! THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY SAID SHE'LL MEET US NOW! ♪
SHE SWALLOWED IT...
...HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER.
REALLY!? WHERE!?
AYA-SAN!!
OH, IT'S AKEO-SAN.

HUH?
THAT MAN TALKING TO THE MASTER ...
...LOOKS FAMILIAR ...
AH YES, THAT'S MOTOMACHI-SAN.

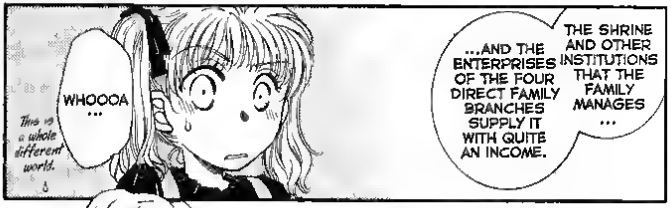
HE'S THE FORMER CHIEF CABINET SECRETARY OR DEPUTY SECRETARY OR SOMETHING.
HE WAS FOUND TO BE CORRUPT AND FORCED TO RESIGN.
HE'S A POLITICIAN!?
And in the cabinet, no less!
THAT REMINDS ME OF SOMETHING MY FATHER'S ASSOCIATES WERE SAYING...
THAT FAMILY...
...WHOSE INFLUENCE REACHES THE VERY CORE OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT!?
IF I CAN WIN THEIR FAVOR, I'LL HAVE MY BEST BACKER YET.
THIS FAMILY...
...REALLY IS SOMETHING TO CONTEND WITH!
PLEASE, AKEO-KUN !!

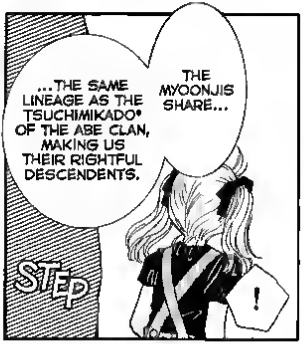
I'LL BE KILLED IF THIS KEEPS ON!
SAVE ME!
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG!
TALK TO THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY FOR ME!
I WAS ORDERED NOT TO INVOLVE THE HEAD OF THIS FAMILY.
MY HANDS ARE TIED.
YOU CAN KILL MY ADVERSARIES WITH A CURSE BEFORE THEY GET ME!
I WAS FRAMED!

HELP ME AND THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY WILL—
BUT THERE MUST BE SOMETHING YOU CAN DO!
I DON'T WANT TO DIE!!
NO...

I NO LONGER HAVE THE AUTHORITY.
ORIGINALLY, IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE YOU-
ENOUGH!!
TURN
EXCUSE ME.
Sir!
Hurrrah!
B... BUT...
NOOO ...

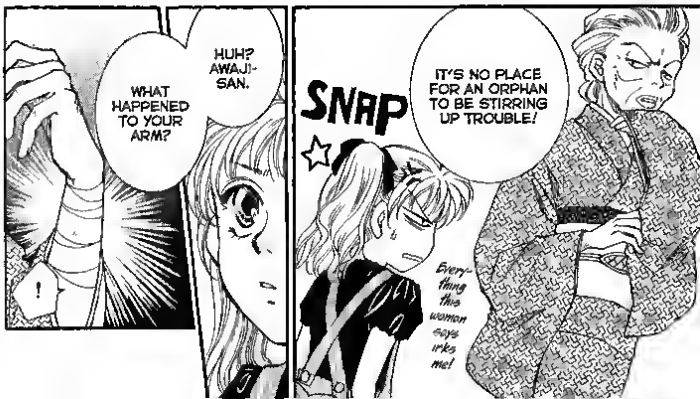
I NO LONGER HAVE THE AUTHORITY.
MASTER...
WHAT DOES HE MEAN BY "NO LONGER"?
I MUST SAY...
JUST HOW MANY BUILDINGS ARE THERE ON THIS PROPERTY?


WHOOOA...
This is a whole different world.
...AND THE ENTERPRISES OF THE FOUR DIRECT FAMILY BRANCHES SUPPLY IT WITH QUITE AN INCOME.
THE SHRINE AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS THAT THE FAMILY MANAGES...



*See Translator's Notes

BEFORE THE START OF THE MEIJI PERIOD, OUR ONMYO SKILLS...
...WERE OUR MOST VALUABLE SOURCE OF EMPLOY-MENT.
BUT SINCE THE PRACTICE OF ONMYO IN THE POLITICAL SECTOR WAS ABOLISHED...
...THE ONMYOJI THAT WORKED AT THE CENTRAL COURT AND THOSE WHO WERE SCATTERED ACROSS THE COUNTRY HAVE BEEN PIVOTAL...
...IN MAINTAINING THE SPIRITUAL BACKBONE OF THIS COUNTRY.
IT'S AN IMPORTANT DUTY TO BE ENTRUSTED WITH.


HUH? AWAJI-SAN.
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR ARM?
!
SNAP
IT'S NO PLACE FOR AN ORPHAN TO BE STIRRING UP TROUBLE!
Everything this woman says irks me!

STAND
THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY IS ON HER WAY.
MORE IMPORT-ANTLY...
.....
IT'S NONE OF YOUR CON-CERN.
TURN
I JUST TWISTED IT A LITTLE.
N..NOTH-ING.
WHIIIRRRR
A... WHEEL-CHAIR!?
WHIRRR
!?
GULP

GREETINGS. WELCOME TO MY HOME.
I'M THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY, NADESHIKO MYOONJI.*
* Note: The same Nadeshiko from the manga Her Majesty's Dog!
SH... SHE'S SO YOUNG!!
I was expecting an old hag like Awaji-san!
AND BEAUTIFUL!!

I HOPE YOU WEREN'T WAITING LONG.
NOT AT ALL.
AND YOU MUST BE CHIKO-SAN.
HUH!?
SHUFFLE
STIFF
YES, MA'AM!
THE RUMORS WERE RIGHT. YOU'RE AN ADORABLE LITTLE GIRL.
Hee hee!
AW, SHUCKS! I'M NOT THAT CUTE...
I SWEAR ... HOW NAUGHTY OF YOU, AKEO-SAN.
TUG
HOLD ON A MINUTE!
HUH!?
BRINGING A GIRL LIKE HER INTO MY HOUSE.
WHAT THE...!?
THIS SUDDEN MOOD SWING CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING ...

YOU'LL MAKE ME...
I KNEW IT! THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY REALLY IS THE MASTER'S...
...JEALOUS.
...DESTINED LOVER, ATTACHED TO THE OTHER SIDE OF HIS THREAD!
YOU'RE MAKING ME SICK.
WHISPER

HYUCK
HYUCK
HYUCK
JUMP
...GIVES ME...
...THE CHILLS.
SUCH POOR ACTING...
YOU GOT ME, YOU GOT ME!
HA HA HA!
Huh?
What is this?
YOU'RE SO CUTE, HOW QUICKLY YOU CATCH ONTO THINGS!
HA HA HA!
Ha ha ha!
Brother?
THAT WASN'T VERY POLITE...
...NOT GIVING ME A HEADS-UP, BROTHER.
SHE WAS JUST... JOKING AROUND?
REALLY THOUGH...

...THAT MEANS THE MASTER...
...IS THIS PROMINENT FAMILY'S...
NAGUMO WAS HIS MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME.
IF THEY'RE BROTHER AND SISTER...
...AND HE'S OLDER THAN HER, THEN...
YOU'RE RELATED!?
B... BROTHER!?
HUH?
THEN WHY IS HIS LITTLE SISTER HEAD OF THE FAMILY?
ORIGINALLY, IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE YOU-
I NO LONGER HAVE THAT AUTHORITY.
THIS WORLD JUST GETS MORE AND MORE COMPLI-CATED!
...PRECIOUS OLDEST SON!!

...MY BIG BROTHER WAS SUPPOSED TO BE HEAD OF THE FAMILY.
I'M SURE YOU'RE SHOCKED ...
...THAT THE LITTLE SISTER HAS INHERITED THE FAMILY ESTATE INSTEAD OF HER BROTHER.
FLAP
UH... N-NO...
THE TRUTH IS...
CLACK
KNEEL
HE'S AN ILLEGITIMATE BASTARD, SO SOME OPPOSED IT.
BUT MY BROTHER REALLY MADE THIS HAPPEN HIMSELF.
RIGHT?
REACH

I'LL NEVER FORGET...
...WHAT HAPPENED THAT DAY NINE YEARS AGO.
SCRATCH

THADUMP
NINE YEARS AGO...?
WAFT
YOU'RE HOPING TO...
...DO THE EXACT SAME THING AGAIN, AREN'T YOU?
VOOM
WHILE IN TOKYO AND AWAY FROM OUR PRYING EYES...
...YOU GATHERED THE FIVE COLORED THREADS...
TOUCH
!

...IN HOPES OF DOING YOU-KNOW-WHAT AGAIN...
MADAM!

THAT WAS...
...AN ACCIDENT.
IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN!
IT'S LIKE THE AIR'S TURNED TO ICE.

EVEN THOUGH THE CICADAS ARE BUZZING SO LOUD OUTSIDE...
NINE YEARS AGO.
AN ACCI-DENT.
...FAN THE ANXIOUS FLAMES INSIDE OF ME.
THOSE FRAGMENTED WORDS...
...THIS HEAVY TENSION ...
...STEALING THE HEAT FROM MY BODY.
GATHERING THE FIVE COLORED THREADS

HMPH.
FINE.
RUSTLE
SNAP
I'M JUST SAYING I'LL EXPOSE YOUR TRUE SIDE SOON ENOUGH!
WHAT!?
AS FAR AS YOUR LETTING AN OUTSIDER SPIN SHIROGANE WITHOUT MY PERMISSION...
...I'LL BE NICE, AND KEEP YOUR PUNISHMENT LIGHT.
IN ANY CASE...

WAIT!!
I FORMED THE PACT WITH IT!
I FOUND SHIROGANE ON MY OWN!
THE MASTER DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG!
HE IS STILL GUILTY OF NEGLIGENCE.
TURN
BUT...!
YOU'RE JUSTIFYING IT ANY WAY YOU CAN.
.....
YOU'RE JUST FINDING FAULT WITH EVERYTHING HE DOES!
YOU'LL DO ANYTHING TO EMBARRASS HIM!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED NINE YEARS AGO...
...AND I HAVE NO RIGHT TO COMMENT ON THIS FAMILY'S AFFAIRS...
...BUT ATTACKING SOMEONE WHO'S DEFENSELESS...
...IS COWARDLY!
AND...
CLENCH
...NO ONE WHO HEADS A FAMILY SHOULD EVER DO IT!
ARE YOU SAYING...!
...I'M NOT FIT TO HEAD THIS FAMILY?

HUH!?
WHAT THE...!?
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE!?

I'M SCARED...
THROB
I CAN'T... MOVE!
SO SCARED...
I LIKE...
...SMART GIRLS.
THROB
HUFF
PURE FEAR...
HUFF
...IS FLOODING MY VERY CENTER!
I CAN'T BREATHE...
HUFF

IT'S GOING TO EAT ME!!
...YOU'LL BE REDUCED TO NOTHING.
OTHER-WISE...
HEY ... DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S ENOUGH?
HUFF
HUFF
NADE-SHIKO-SAN'S AN EXTRA-ORDINARY SPIRIT MEDIUM.
MANIPULAT-ING A SOUL IS CHILD'S PLAY FOR HER.
.....
IF YOU WANT TO SURVIVE IN THIS HOUSE-HOLD...
...YOU HAVE TO BE CLEVER.

FAZE
(tap)
!

WOBBLE
NO...
WHAT I JUST SAW... WAS THAT...?
MADAM?
HEY, YOU OKAY?
CHIKO ...?
SMACK
I'M SCARED ...
I'M SO AFRAID ...
BREATHE
I'M REALLY FREAKED OUT...
... BUT-!!

CHIKO!?
Is she broken?
VRRRR
JUMP
ばっ
THROb
THROb
I'VE NEVER HEARD ANYTHING THAT STUPID IN MY LIFE!!

SLAM
MY BECOMING SHIROGANE'S SPINNER...
...HAD TO BE DESTINY!
MY STRING OF FATE LED ME TO IT!
I'M TIRED OF...
...BEING PARALYZED BY FEAR.
SHIRO-GANE...
...SAID OUR STRINGS OF FATE ARE TIED TOGETHER.
THE MASTER...
IT'S NOT THE MASTER'S FAULT AT ALL!
IF I CAN'T PROTECT THOSE I CARE ABOUT...
...THEN I DON'T WANT TO BE "CLEVER".
AND IF YOU CALL THAT STUPIDITY...

...THEN THERE'S NO CURE FOR WHAT I AM!!

BAD UM

pfft ha ha ha!!

Is that anything to be proud of?

She didn't hesitate.

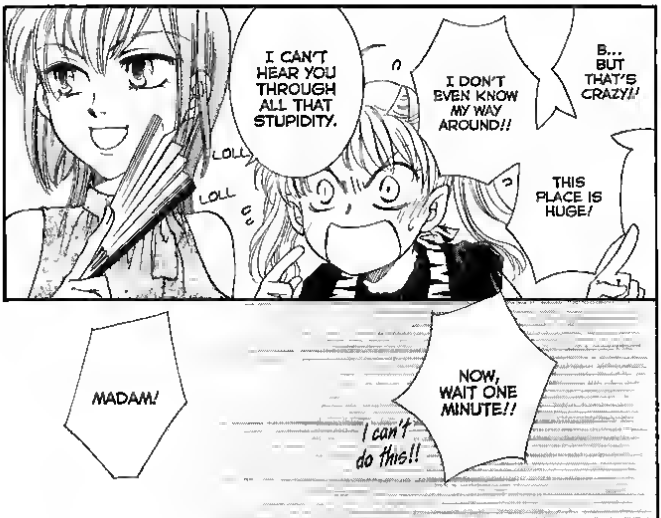
YOU'RE SAYING YOU WERE BOUND FOR THIS FATE?
I'm gonna split my sides!
Ha ha ha!
HYUCK HYUCK HYUCK HYUCK!!
PAH!
FINE. THEN I'LL GIVE YOU A SHOT.
IF YOU WIN A MATCH AGAINST ME...
...I'LL ABSOLVE AKEO-SAN OF HIS CRIME.
A MATCH!?
SHE'S NO MATCH FOR HER...
WHO SAID IT WOULD BE A MATCH OF SKILL?

IT'LL BE A GAME OF TAG.
COME AGAIN!?
BLOW ON IT.
BLOW?
I'LL HAVE A SUBSTITUTE PLAY ON MY BEHALF.
FLAT
I'M SURE YOU'VE ALREADY ...
...NOTICED MY CONDITION.

AH!
WARP
STRETCH
PHOO-
IT'S ME!?
Hee hee!
Ha ha ha!
TMP
TMP
TMP
WHAT!?
TAG, YOU'RE IT!
HEE HEE! ♡
SMACK
Youch!

*See Translator's Notes

WE'LL USE THIS ENTIRE PROPERTY
AND SET A TIME LIMIT.
Exactly two hours.
IF YOU DON'T NAB THAT GIRL...
...AND TAG HER "IT" WITHIN THE TIME LIMIT...
...YOU'LL BE TURNED INTO A REAL DEMON.
YOU'D BETTER NOT HOLD BACK! ♡
What!?


B... BUT THAT'S CRAZY!!
I DON'T EVEN KNOW MY WAY AROUND!!
THIS PLACE IS HUGE!
I CAN'T HEAR YOU THROUGH ALL THAT STUPIDITY.
LOLL
LOLL
NOW, WAIT ONE MINUTE!!
I can't do this!!
MADAM!

WHAT!?
FOR ONE MONTH, HE'LL WEAR AN AFRO AND TIGER-STRIPED SHORTS.
IF CHIKO-SAN LOSES, HE'LL SHARE HER LOSS.
IN THAT CASE...
Like The Drifters.*
BADUUUM
HM...
IT'D SERVE AS TRAINING FOR TSUNA, SO I HAVE NO OBJECTIONS.

*See Translator's Notes

NOOOO!!
He'll be a Drifter.
UNDER-STOOD.

Here goes!
I've got rights too!
Come on! What about my opinion!?

I'M GOING TO WIN.
I'LL BE OKAY, MASTER!
CHI-YAKO ...

I'LL SEE YOU WHEN I GET BACK!
RIGHT . .
Then just win! Win, already!!
I don't wanna look like The Drifters!
Noooo!!
I'll never get married now...
AWAJI.
PATS

NOTIFY EVERY ABLE BODY ON THE PREMISES!
A DEMON...
HAS GOTTEN LOSE.
TELL THEM TO TRACK IT DOWN AND EXTERMINATE IT.
WHAT!?
THIS WAS HER PLAN ALL ALONG!
ARE YOU TRYING TO KILL CHIYAKO!?

YOU ALWAYS ...
...TAKE WHAT IS PRECIOUS TO ME.
ISN'T IT ONLY FAIR...
...THAT I TAKE SOMETHING PRECIOUS FROM YOU?
Boo hoo
Quit crying!

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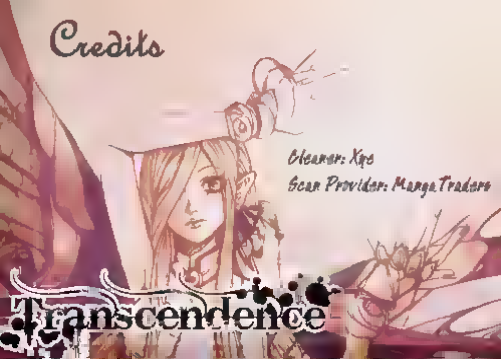

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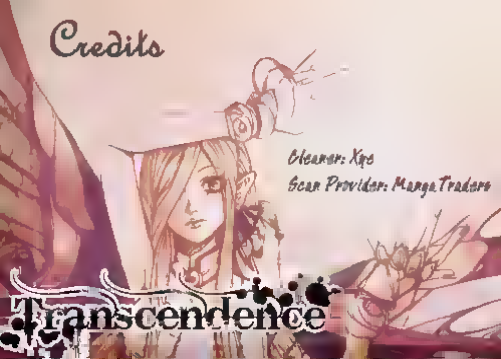

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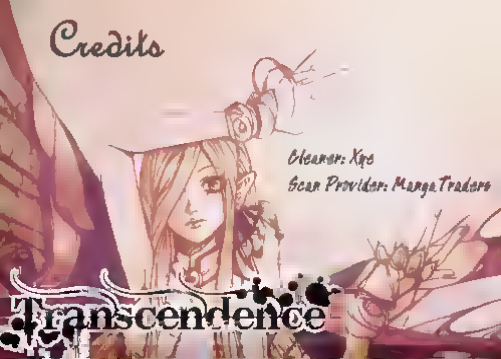

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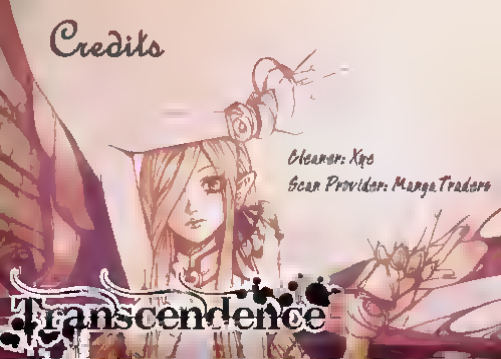

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